

# Cardenden 1999

**An Ethnography of Working  
Class Nationalism in a Scottish Village**

**Paul Gilfillan**

**Doctor of Philosophy  
The University of Edinburgh**

**2002**



## **Declaration**

**I declare that this thesis, submitted to the University of Edinburgh for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy (Ph.D.) has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university.**

**All research contained herein is entirely my own.**

**Date:** 28 february 2002

**Signature:**



# Abstract

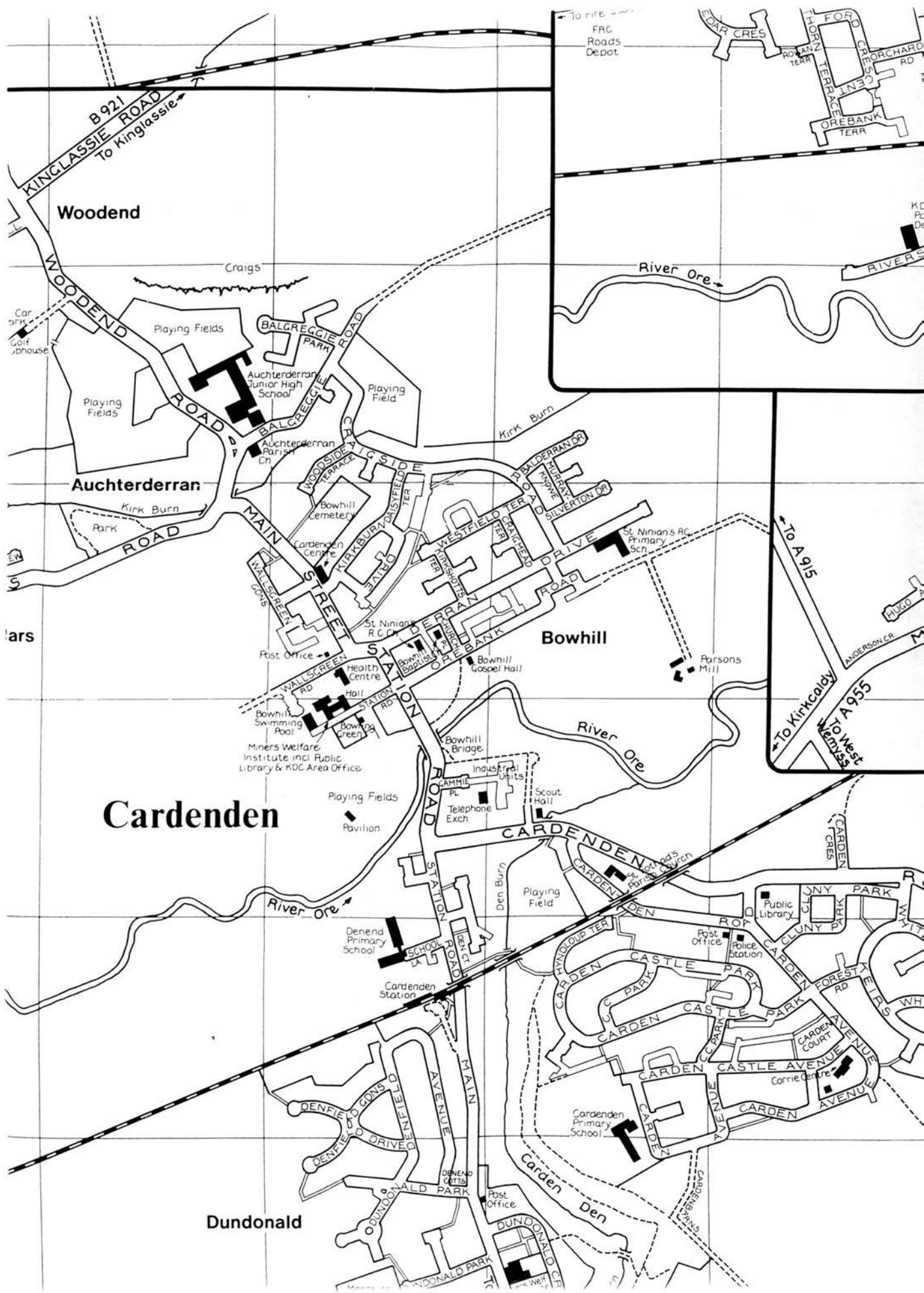
This ethnographic monograph, based upon research carried out during 1999 when the Scottish parliament was re-convened, outlines the structural and cultural logic of working class nationalism in Scotland today and grounds this reality, in particular among a younger generation, in the post-industrial village of Cardenden in central Fife. The central argument is that a politics of nationality is being driven by class realities and which frames the desire to have Nation and State congruent without recourse to metaphors of 'blood and soil' and is indifferent to appeals to civic nationalism or civil society.

As an ethnography of class this research ethnographically grounds the general idea of working class structuration and class *habitus* developed by the late Pierre Bourdieu by specifying an original conception of the Scottish working class habitus – specifically, the “worked self.”

The chapters deal specifically with the crisis in the reproduction of locality, housing conditions, anti-social behaviour and eviction; ethnographically details a British and unionist identity among an older generation of locals and ethnographically and analytically details the embodied nature of work and personhood.







Woodend

Auchterderran

Bowhill

Cardenden

Dundonald

**This is Cardenden; this is Scotland.**

Michelle Hankin (age 6)  
Good Friday 1999

**It seems tae hae been oor generation that started it and they're gonnae finish it off. Ma mum an that, she thinks we should get it [independence] noo, bit when Ah wis growin up she jist voted Labour. Whereas noo they see us, me an aa ma mates vote SNP so we're startin it. We've got the parliament and the ones that are growin up they'll hear it mair fae us than we did fae oor mum and dad, so they're gonnae pick up on it.**

Steven Haggart  
38 Muirtonhill Road  
July 25th 1999



# Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	i
<b>Introduction</b>	1
<b>Chapter 1 The Crisis in the Reproduction of Locality</b>	59
1.1 Cardenden Mining Archives 1991 – 2000	64
1.2 Local Representations: Rorie, Houston, Corrie & Rankin	66
1.3 The '45 and '79 Generations	81
1.4 From the Society of Scarcity to Scarcely Any Society?	96
<b>Chapter 2 Id, Identity &amp; Ideology: Work &amp; The Integral Self</b>	113
2.1 Writing About Working	120
2.2 The Worked Self: The <i>Reducio Ad Sensum &amp; Ad Humanum</i>	123
2.3 Worry: Of Mind and Money	129
2.4 Constructions of Personhood	138
<b>Chapter 3 The Mediation and Eviction of Difference</b>	147
3.1 The End of “Home Rule”	147
3.2 The Housed Body and Somatic Reflexivity	163
3.3 The Production of Hysterical Relations	172
3.4 Structure and Self	186

<b>Chapter 4 The Production of Indifference</b>	193
4.1 The Local History Group	193
4.2 The Practice of Memory and Locality	196
4.3 The Practice of Indifference	203
4.4 The Unimagined Community: The Kingdom of Fife	214
4.5 The Caesura of 1 July 1999	218
 <b>Chapter 5 Working Class Nationalism</b>	 239
5.1 The Pantomime Goes On	240
5.2 Unionism: The Spectre of Comparison With England	249
5.3 Scottish Nationalism: Bourgeois Norm or Working Class Miracle?	254
5.4 Class and Nation	272
5.5 The Public Emergence of Reality	285
 <b>Conclusion</b>	 295
 <b>Appendix</b>	 306
 <b>Bibliography</b>	 315



# Acknowledgements

I want to record my thanks and appreciation to my supervisor Dr. Iris Jean-Klein at the Department of Social Anthropology at Edinburgh University for her constant help, and for being a fundamental supporting voice regarding the value of my research since becoming my supervisor in the late summer of 1998. Thank you Iris.

I also want to thank Professor Anthony Cohen of Edinburgh University whose support during the initial stages was so important to the viability of my doctoral proposal and the research presented here.

I must also record my thanks to my informants.

I should point out that informants were sometimes reluctant to expand on their views at any length. Often the exchange hardly constituted an "interview" at all. Other informants were much more expansive in sharing their views on events. I thank both types of respondents not simply because the researcher is appreciative of any information forthcoming from respondents (as they are perfectly entitled not to share anything with a stranger knocking on their door on a Sunday afternoon) but even the briefest of encounters was sufficient in the overwhelming number of cases to enable me to form an accurate judgment as to where someone located themselves in relation to the political events of recent years and 1 July 1999 in particular.

I would like to thank by name the following: Mrs. Brown, Mr Donaldson, Mr and Mrs Taylor, Mrs Anderson, Mrs Whyte, Mrs Wotherspoon, Mrs Scott, Mrs Harley, Mr Milne, Mrs McConville, Mrs Shand, Gail Martin, Anne Marie Letters, Ms Muir, Mr Johnston, Bert Lister, Audrey O'Brien, Mrs Johnstone, Mark McConville, Mr and Mrs Beveridge, Mr Spence, Mr

and Mrs Christie, Mary Bolland, Iris Ferns, Susan Steel, Brian Wilson, Mr Johnston, Mr Peacock, Barbara Adam, Janice Kenny, Alistair E. McLelland, Andrew Spence, Janet Kirk, Jim Slaven, Teresa McCormack, Margaret McLennan, Elsie Crichton, Isabella Wilson, James McFarlane, Ann Penman, William Cowan, Lynn Bruce, Steven Haggart, Mrs Wilson, Isabell Scott, Robert Howie, Alfred Davie, William and Selina Smith, Thomas and Helen Shand, James B. Reid, Andrew and James Peebles, Peter and Margaret Paterson, Teresa McGlaughlin, Janet Reilly, Joyce Harper, Wilma Beattie, Catherine Robinson, Agnes Heggie, Alexander and Janet Smith, Stephen Robins, Mrs Hamilton, Annie Telfer, Robert Brown, Sheila Kelly, Mrs Glover, Robert Gardner, Mrs O'Brien, Mrs Kane, Christina Butchart, Mr Carswell, Thomas McLanders, Norma Watson, Mr Proctor, Mary Gibbons, Mr Hindley, Charles Rankin, Martha Bruce, Mary Thomson, Hetty Haldane, Janet Mathieson, Shiela Fowler, Steven Herd, Mary Page, June Mercer, Margaret Holmes, Kenneth Anderson, George Curran, Kirsty Shanks, Thomas Wallace, Isobel Sims, Philip Sims, Thomas Wallace, Brian McEwan and Heather Stewart.

I thank the members of the local history group: Annie and Moira Laird, Nan Pearson, Hugh Young, Molly and Jim, Jim Russell, Adam, Wull, John, Anne Mead and Eileen Nisbet.

I want to record my thanks to those I worked with at *East of Scotland Water*: Paul Diamond, Mick Kelman, Adam Sharpe, Gary Beal, Jimmy Shand, Ivor Cox, Stevie Bartie, Wullie Watters, Tim Colville, Jim Melville, Kenny Dobell, Jock McPhee, Dave Bowson, Jimmy Cunningham, Jock Spence, Tam Soutar and the Drainage DLO squad.

I also thank the following for additional interviews and detailed information which each helped provide during fieldwork: Chum Wallace, Bernadette Cranston, Louise Urquhart, the late Bien Bernard, Peggy Mitchell, Dan Imrie, Tom Slaven, Rosemary Liewald, Mary Duncan, Arthur Campbell, Tom and Margaret Jones.

I also want to thank Professor Michael Lynch of the Scottish History department at Edinburgh University for his authoritative help regarding certain fundamental errors of interpretation in matters historical which remain prevalent in the "historical consciousness" of members of local history groups in Fife.

On a more personal note, I want to thank my brother Mark who was always such a help to me and Eva as a young couple in Edinburgh and for all his help when I was starting back on my academic studies in October 1996. Thanks Mark.

Being local in Cardenden is still overwhelmingly a matter of kinship. I want to thank my brother David who was a great source of information and perspective during fieldwork and who acted as "gatekeeper" to locals and situations which ordinarily would have been out of bounds. I want to thank him more than anyone for making me feel "back home" in Cardenden and being such a help in data gathering.

I am happy at last to be able to say thank you to Fr. Eamonn O'Brien SSC who has been a long-term mentor and friend since teenage years as an undergraduate anthropology student in Ireland. He knows how much he is an integral part and condition *sine qua non* behind my doctoral research. *Go raibh mile maith agat.*

I am delighted at long last to be able to thank my mother and father. I couldn't have managed this doctoral thesis (and so much more besides) without them. With all my love I dedicate this work to both of them.

Finally, I thank Eva for her many valuable insights into Cardenden which I have drawn on; as well as for "hanging on" during the difficult times during fieldwork. And there were some.

# Introduction

The research presented here is an ethnography of working class nationalism. The study is based upon fieldwork, beginning in July 1998, in the former coalmining village of Cardenden in central Fife, Scotland. Having been brought up in Cardenden, where some of my family still reside, this study is very much an "anthropology at home." The study also follows on from research carried out in Cardenden for an undergraduate thesis (1987) on social inequality and a masters degree thesis (1997) on the miners' strike of 1984-5.

The contribution of the study is two-fold: firstly, as a rare example of ethnography of class at the turn of the millennium in a western capitalist society and secondly, as a rare example of an ethnography of nationalism at the moment of its historic triumph. As an ethnography of a working class this research ethnographically grounds the general idea of class *habitus* developed by the late Pierre Bourdieu (1977; 1984). It thus specifies a theoretical conception with first-hand observations related to the situation of the Scottish working class habitus. More specifically, the study attempts to theorise the "worked self."

The second contribution of the study to anthropological research on "nationalism" – which, in contrast to the anthropology of class, has been prolific and expanding - follows from this theoretical advance. An original understanding of "nationalism" is proposed. I will argue that successfully taking account of the class bias in expressions of Scottish nationalism, recognising that all expressions are heavily class-inflected and that some forms dominate the political scene as well as anthropological scene, transforms our apprehension of the "nature" of nationalism. Such a class-sensitive and discriminating approach alters also our reading of previous ethnographies of nationalism.

The central thesis is that the politics of nationality in Scotland in the latter part of the twentieth century is being driven by class realities. Thus there are many levels at which nationality is *done* and equally many forms in which it is done. They are not congruent or harmoniously wedded. Working class-nationalism frames its desire to have the Nation and State congruent without making recourse to metaphors of "blood and soil" (*vide* Bauman 1992). Furthermore, it is indifferent to appeals to "civic nationalism" or "civil society" (*vide* Yack 1996; Hearn 2000), the form which is favoured at elite bourgeois and academic levels of Scottish nation-making.

While some have argued there has been a shift to a nationality-based *politics of identity* in Scotland away from traditional "materialist" conceptions of class politics (McCrone 1996; Paterson 1996), I argue this new politics remains a class-based phenomenon. Cohen's notion of "personal nationalism" (1996 & 1997) can serve as a methodological and analytical medium with which to capture the inflections of nationality-based engagement (Brubaker 1996) by everyday life experience, which in its turn is critically inflected by issues of livelihood and class. Gender would have been as critical as class, *is* as critical as class, as it inflects class. The data presented allows this to transpire though this thesis does not follow this up systematically or analytically. This is one of the limitations of the current study.

### **An Anecdote & Ethnography of "Nothing in Particular"**

On a Saturday morning in July 1999, I went to buy bread from the bakery on Cardenden Road across from where I had been living for a year with my wife and daughter. As it was early and business was slow, I began chatting with the woman serving behind the counter, telling her I was a student researching Cardenden. At this, she told me her son had graduated the week before from Heriot-Watt university in physics; that he was "waiting for clearance before going down south" to

join the Ministry of Defence. "Well..." she concluded, "...there's nothing up here is there?" Trying to communicate "first impressions" of Cardenden, uppermost in my mind are recollections of when I first began fieldwork i.e. ten months after the referendum to establish a mandate for the Scottish parliament<sup>1</sup> and a year before the opening of that new parliament. What stood out and continues to impress itself on me were the numerous instances when locals expressed puzzlement as to why someone would want to research here. As the local author, Ian Rankin, has one of his fictional characters observe in his novel *Dead Souls* (1999): "He seemed really interested in Cardenden. I told him off, thought he was taking the mickey."

Among local residents who enquired what it was I was looking for, I could elicit supportive recognition of the value of research when I mentioned "working class nationalism". It seemed as though local residents intuitively regarded this as a *bona fide* "something." Alternatively, I invited a bemused incredulity when I simply replied "*I'm studying Cardenden.*" One might guess that the non-plussed reaction was based in part upon locals' view that "*there's nothing here,*" as they so often said, so that I was setting myself a challenge: how to research "nothing"; how to make something of nothing.

In his ethnography of the working class in northern England Willis (1977) argued that: "...before any mass party could articulate itself properly as the representative of the working class it must understand and learn from the working class consciousness and culture" (1977: 154). But to this day anthropology has done little to generate this level of understanding but nevertheless now imagines to apprehend nationalism in all its guises. In his *Last Memoirs* (1966) the Communist MP for West Fife, Wullie Gallacher, writes of his regret that the Communist

---

<sup>1</sup> Held on the 11th September 1997 with 75% voting in favour of the creation of a parliament and 65%



movement failed to appreciate the importance of "culture." When the modernism of Communism disallowed (Scottish) nationality, religion and pre-industrial history as sources of the self or enriching mediations of "being working class," this was done in the name of articulating the "real" interests of the working class. I will argue there is an analogy between this theoretical absence and the dominant political dictum within political discourse and the media that now the working classes take foreign holidays, run cars and have bought their council houses, they should stop identifying themselves as being working class; that failure to do so must reveal a species of "false consciousness" or an addiction to a backward gazing nostalgia. I will argue, and show, that the idea that the working classes have no culture of their own, because they have failed to constitute this culture and its own developmental path, reveals an economistically determined view of *homo economicus* which politicians and anthropologists are prone to adopt.

On the assumption that it does in fact exist, why has it proved so difficult to recognise and constitute the autonomous realm of working class culture? The answer I give is that the sense of nothing or the "absence of something" found in working class communities, which the people of Cardenden presented to me (and themselves) of themselves, is powerfully reiterated in political and scholarly discourses and studies (which are *not* attempted in depressed areas and the everyday life there) because it fundamentally challenges anthropological ideas of "meaning-making". The field of absences in the study of nationalism suggests there is no real substantive culture of value in such conditions of de-industrialisation.

The question for anthropology then is this: *can* ethnography achieve a theoretical purchase on "working class culture" and, as a consequence of this, on working class nationalism? How do we produce an account of and instil with "meaning" fields of discourse and practice which are politically elided?

## **The Anthropology of Nationalism**

Although there does not exist an agreed definition of nationalism, there is an ever-increasing literature devoted to the subject and broad agreement among scholars that "nationalism" has historically passed through a series of understandings. These may be summed up in point form:

1. The view that nationalism is an essentially "backward" ideology linked to the chauvinism of race, ethnicity, language or religion etc. Identified with the Balkans and the aggressive ideology of racism and the expansionist nationalism of fascism, this view identifies nationalism as the cause of endemic conflict and violence (*vide* Kohn 1945; Hayes 1960). Associated with this view is the prediction that this form of nationalism will lessen with increasing modernisation and "rationality." This view emerged in particular within Western discourse after the Great War but is still in evidence in contemporary debates surrounding the current crisis in the Balkans (*vide* Halpern & Kideckel 2000).
2. Nationalism as a European, progressive and liberal modernising ideology which arose in the late eighteenth century and in the nineteenth century resulted in state-building programmes which precipitated the end of the European *ancient regimes*. Subsequently it was 'exported' to the rest of the world via colonisation and industrialisation (*vide* Kedourie 1960; Nairn 1981; Gellner 1983; Chatterjee 1996).
3. The liberation-driven nationalist movements of the twentieth century involving former colonies and their struggles for political independence (*vide* Jayawardena 1986; Wallerstein 1979; Bhabha 1990; Said 1993) This view of nationalism is continuous with the view expanded in point 2 where European cases are concerned, but proposes a unique politics of nationalism in post-colonial settings (Jean-Klein 2001).



4. The unexpected post-Communist nationalism of central and eastern European nations in the period 1989-1991 (*vide* Glenny 1990; Lieven 1993; Verdery 1993; Bremmer 1993; Smith 1996). This form of nationalism is often linked to that described in point 1; where a resurgence of nationalism after the collapse of the USSR was due to “old” cultural differences.

5. The equally unexpected but *not* equally problematised neo-nationalist movements of Western industrial “stateless-nations” such as Scotland, Wales, Quebec, Catalonia and Northern Ireland etc. that have arisen since the nineteen–sixties (*vide* Tiryakian & Rogowski 1985; Balcells 1996).

### **Paradigm Shifts**

What have been some of the definitions of the nation and nationalism? I identify four paradigm shifts.

#### *Eurocentric Evolutionism*

This view maintained that nationalism is primarily a political ideology which holds the nation and state should be congruent i.e. each nation requires its own state. This view was premised upon the conviction that identifiable “nations” empirically existed more or less as discrete bounded cultures and groups which legitimated their right to a state of their own. Once the nation-state was created, this view tended to assume the “age of nationalism” was essentially at an end. It is significant that Weber, Durkheim and Marx only wrote specifically on nationalism insofar as it impacted upon what they saw as the more fundamental task of theorising the transition from pre-modern to modern industrial society in Europe.

#### *The Nation as Modern*

This view held that nationalism is linked to modernity and to uneven development and industrialisation. This view is primarily associated with

the early writings of Ernest Gellner (1964; 1983), although Anderson (*in* Balakrishnan 1996) has argued that many of Gellner's views were in fact anticipated by Otto Bauer. Gellner made a break with the earlier evolutionist view of nationalism as a passed development and theorised nationalism as a feature of modernity *per se*. Gellner theorised nationalism within a particular univocal and Eurocentric conception of modernity i.e. viewed modernity and the rise of homogenous “national cultures” and “national identities” as *supplanting* pre-modern identities and forms of communal association based on kinship and tradition etc. In Gellner the ethnographic evidencing of nationalism is largely absent because of his concern with more broad historical and sociological forces. His theory may be termed functionalist insofar as he viewed nationalism as functional to modernisation, as well as evolutionary. In his later writings Gellner (1994; 1997) postulated two kinds of nations: some (older European nations) were *real* i.e. culturally, ethnically and historically bounded whereas others, such as Estonia, were not yet constructed or culturally and historically grounded.

### *The Nation as Constructed*

Alongside Gellner the author most cited in anthropological writing on nationalism is Benedict Anderson whose seminal monograph *Imagined Communities* (1983 & 1991) established the basic premise that the nation is an “imagined community.” It is “imagined” on two counts. Firstly, in terms of *scale*, in contrast to pre-modern “face-to-face” communities, the national community involves numbers (and geographic distances) which mean the individual members will never meet all other members and so must “imagine” a community of people like him or herself. Communion cannot be directly experienced but must be imagined. Secondly, the political community of this type is imagined in the sense that it is not a naturally or culturally given organic entity but is historically produced. As such, the “nation” is particularly susceptible to ethnographic analysis because it stands in need of a continuous process of being imagined in any particular ethnographic context.

## *The Ethnographic Study of the Nation*

Both Gellner's and Anderson's evolutionary views are now recognised as highly optimistic and problematic as history has proved both nationalism and modernity are clearly compatible with many aspects of tradition, such as kinship, religion and local / regional identity. The current thinking among anthropologists (Handler 1984 & 1985; Smith 1986; Segal & Handler 1992; Brubaker 1996) stresses continuity, the existence of multiple modernities, multiple identities and a rehabilitation of traditional forms of community as integral to ethnographic accounts of nationalism.

These latter advances in current thinking about nationalism within anthropology I will try to pull together and illustrate their relevance in the account that follows.

In an ethnographic engagement with Ortner's proposal that anthropological commitment to "ethnographic thickness" in the study of resistance will invariably reveal *ambiguity*, Jean-Klein (2001) shows that the proposal is continuous with a post-modernist trend in the anthropological study on nationalism which has been at pains to redeem a perceived prior collusion with nationalism by adopting a "determined, condemnational, and "deconstructive" ethnographic stance" (2001: 85). Alongside this moral stance towards nationalism Jean-Klein argues there also exists "an entirely opposite approach as well; the current status quo is, in fact, a *split posture*" (2001: 85) between an identifiable deconstructive approach to the nationalisms in the West and a more sympathetic approach to those Third World nationalisms "that are inextricably connected with anticolonial struggles" (ibid. 85). Perhaps then the reason why anthropologists have not adopted a deconstructivist approach to Scottish nationalism is because it is viewed as a "subaltern" nationalism in the West (*vide* Aretxaga 1996). I argue that to adopt Handler's (1985) call for ethnographers of

nationalism to move beyond a dialogical relationship with “nationalist” informants in favour of Sapir's “destructive analysis of the familiar” (in Handler 1985: 171) is an inappropriate strategy, but not because of issues of political correctness or the felt need to sympathise with the “subaltern,” but because in an analysis of *working class*–nationalism in Scotland, the nationalist “paraphernalia” which anthropologists like Handler are keen to deconstruct are largely absent, and that such an ethnographic stance involves a mis-recognition of the class-basis of nationalism in Scotland.

I follow to some extent the line opened by Gellner (1983) which characterises nationalism as an essentially modern phenomenon. The insights of Herzfeld (1997) and Cohen (1996; 1997) are also important in this study as they allow an appreciation of the role of *locality* in the practice of national imagination. Gellner (1983) and Anderson (1983) have tended to stress anonymity in their theorising of “mass society,” as Scotland no doubt would also be characterised. Working class–nationalism, however, involves precisely a way of imagining the national community which differs from other commonly reported “Western” constructions of the nation (Chatterjee 1993) according to the literature. Thus, the study of Cardenden does not bear out the truism that the nation is a form of imagination in *contradistinction* to, for example, *class-inflected* imaginings (Anderson 1983; Balakrishnan 1996). Finally, the linkages which locals make with pre-modern history as highlighted by theorists of nationalism such as Smith (1986; 1994) and Llobera (1994) are important and relevant. I will systematically develop these insights in the ethnography to follow.

### **Modernity & Postmodernity**

The academic debate on nationalism has historically been caught up in the debates over the Great Transformation from the pre-modern era to modernity. An important preliminary distinction to be made is that between accounts of nations, their beginnings and development, from

accounts of nationalist *ideology*. Theories of nationalism (*vide* Gellner 1983; Nairn 1997) are often not about the origin of the nation and national identity as such, but about the eighteenth century ideology named "nationalism". Gellner summarises the debate between "primordialist" and "modernist" theories of nationalism thus:

...one side says that nations were there all the time or some of them were anyway, and that the past matters a great deal; and where the modernists like myself believe that the world was created round about the end of the eighteenth century.

(1996: 366).

A convinced "modernist", Gellner writes the nationalist's "most misguided claim" is the belief that:

...the "nations" are there, in the very nature of things, only waiting to be 'awakened' (a favourite nationalist expression and image) from this regrettable slumber, by the nationalist.

(1983: 47-8).

However, what were fresh insights in 1983 have passed into the anthropologist's and nationalist's common sense. It costs the nationalist little nowadays to admit the nation is as artificial or as "imagined" as any radical constructivist would wish. I argue that to be so obviously right is to miss the point, so that we can conclude with Smith that: " 'social constructionism', for all its insights and influence today, does not in my view take us very far" (1994: 378) to the extent that we can show that a pro-nationalist standpoint can work with the premise that the nation is constructed.

In the constructivist versus primordialist approaches to national identity primordialism is often unequivocally conceived diachronically i.e. in relation to "the past," yet primordial might simply signify what is

perennial as it relates to group identity. Despite this, there is a routine reproduction of a false dualism such as "ethnos versus unevenness" (*vide* Connor 1992; Nairn 1994), and definitions of the primordial as belonging to the past. It is easy, given for example the popular hegemony of modernism, to win the day for 'modernity' and 'reason' (and therefore Nairn's nationalist views) when one's "half-modern" unionist opponents are irrevocably stuck, as Nairn has put it, somewhere in the past "beyond reason" (1994).

Similarly for Smith (1994) and Grosby (1994), simply to posit an ideology that is appropriated or borrowed due to historico-sociological demands of communities and groups "becoming modern," is to forgo much of what we commonly expect a theory of nationalism to explain. Modernist / materialist appeals to "uneven development" do not explain whence came the idea and the substance that makes possible the historical project of nation-building, or in the case of Scotland, the mobilisation for political independence. Nairn's (1981) thesis, for example, might be more useful as an explanation of why the *British* State (not nation) came about, rather than the social bases of Scottish nationalism.

My own view based on my study of Cardenden is that "modernist" explanations of nationalism naturalise the ideology of nationalism by naturalising modernity, and this is problematic *vis-a-vis* Scottish nationalism because Scotland is one of those "historic" nations to have emerged prior to the modern period and the rise of nationalism in the eighteenth century.

During fieldwork the Scottish parliament was "re-convened." Since then there has emerged something of a cottage industry in searching for the "true" meaning of the restoration of the Scottish parliament and of modern Scottish history. While it is now unproblematic to assert the original abolition of the Scottish parliament in 1707 was a "mistake," this does not progress us very far as calls for the restoration of the Scottish Parliament and independence were campaigned for by the exiled James



Stuart in his *Declaration to the Scots Nation* (1708). If the original abolition of the Scottish parliament was so controversial in its own day, why has its restoration taken so long? What is different about today? I will argue that just as a particular history and "cultural logic" was implicated in the dissolution of the Scottish parliament, so with its restoration in 1999 is implied a re-appropriation of and "victory" for a history and cultural logic that was defeated in 1707 and that the working class (of a younger generation in particular) are the bearers of this now successful "cultural logic."

Because the modern period coincides with the eclipse of Scottish statehood, working class-nationalism implies modernity has failed. It is because the rise and fall of modernity has coincided with the political fall and rise of Scotland that the relationships between the working class and modernity are an important theme to emerge from fieldwork. Is working class nationalism a belated modernist force (as Marx believed in the case of Polish and Irish nationalism) or the gravedigger of modernity i.e. a species of the "medieval particularism" so feared by Lenin? When Ardener defined modernism as "a belief in the once-for-all distinction between the present age (called 'Modern') and the past" (in Overing 1985: 47) can we conclude that modernity can not be viewed as anything other than a "mistake" now that the political wisdom of the previous three hundred years has been recanted? To conceive "nation" and "nationalism" free of modernist historicism is a heuristic move that allows us to theorise the passing of modernity while keeping nationalism present.

### **Anthropology of Class**

Of particular importance in my account of working class-nationalism is the link to *practice* (Brubaker 1996; Bourdieu 1977). As noted earlier, it was Ernest Gellner (1983) who argued that nationalism was not a developmental stage to be reached and subsequently transcended but a *necessary* and integral part of modern industrial society as such. Far

from the "evolutionary" view that believed the age of nationalism would soon be over, nationalism was ubiquitous and "banal" (Billig 1995). But with this theoretical advance comes an obvious problem for academic understandings of nationalism. Because nationalism is often seen to be responsible for the reality of war and episodes of communal violence seen everyday in newspapers and on television screens, intellectuals also usually feel obliged to identify themselves either implicitly or explicitly as "anti-nationalist" as a matter of intellectual veracity so as to constitute themselves as politically progressive commentators immune to the seduction of nationalism.

The problem then for academic discourse on nationalism is this: when we break with the "pervasive substantialist, realist cast of mind that attributes real, enduring existence to nations" (Brubaker 1996: 15n) and define the nation and nationalism with Brubaker as "a category of practice, not (in the first instance) a category of analysis" (1996: 7), and *further mediate* this emphasis on practice by careful attention to other areas of officially unrelated practice, manual labour for example (*vide* chapter two), we can ask whether that which observing intellectuals of nationalism seem to be immune from grasping (insofar as the "object" of study is working class-nationalism) is what Bourdieu (1977) has named "the objective limits of objectivism," i.e. the inability to grasp why they are unable to grasp the reality of nationalism.

While Pierre Bourdieu, who remains the foremost contemporary theoretician of class, has not written specifically on nationalism, an obvious consequence of his writings on the "scholastic" point of view *vis-a-vis* nationalism is that the very co-ordinates of scholars' positionality, their very detachment and privileged class and institutional positions, which they implicitly believe empowers them to observe nationalism "fairly and impartially", in fact traps them into academic careers which remain within what Gadamer had called "the agony of seeing" (1975: 536) and Bourdieu names the inadequate "synoptic view"



(1977). Hence, within the history of academic commentary on nationalism there is a predictable focus upon the more obvious and overt production of nationalism among elite groups, the characterisation of nationalism as an essentially middle class project, a species of "false consciousness" among the working classes in the Marxist tradition, a "necessary evil" for modernists such as Gellner and the host of premature obituaries of nationalism penned by intellectuals betraying their class ethnocentrism. Such class-inflected bias is something I attempt to avoid. Something else which I hope to avoid is a "refusal of reflexivity."

### **The Refusal of Reflexivity**

Within the "writing culture" debate, the move to highlight the ethnographer's own embeddedness in his or her own particular "home culture" seems set to remain incapable of achieving its promise if the issue of class is not made a central condition of being able to invoke notions of reflexivity or the hope that "The science of the exotic is being "repatriated"" (Marcus & Fischer 1986: 23). While I agree with Cohen's assertion that "The self is the essential element of anthropological fieldwork" (1987:207), the issue of class is central to ethnographic reflexivity and should not be the preserve of the "indigenous ethnographer" who happens to "write culture" in a western industrial setting among a working class community.

The "new space opened up by the disintegration of "Man" as *telos* for a whole discipline" (Clifford & Marcus 1986: 4) often highlights as an issue for ethnographic writing the disappearance of social class, so that a criticism of the postmodern turn in the "writing culture" debate i.e. that it results in the perpetuation of a class-blind "bourgeois, Western, individualistic ideology" (Jarvie in James, Hockey & Dawson 1997: 1) is difficult to avoid. In their introduction to *After Writing Culture* (1997), a conscious attempt to develop Clifford and Marcus's earlier volume, the editors nowhere

mention class as a fundamental category of the "anthropological self" and a fundamental influence upon anthropological texts.

Similarly with regard to "ethnicity." In *Ethnicity: Anthropological Constructions* Banks (1996) sides with de Waal's (1996) insistence that anthropologists refrain from describing the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa as "ethnic groups" only to immediately add "...of course, at another time it might well be anthropologically useful to consider relations between the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa 'groups' in Rwanda within a general paradigm of ethnicity" (1996: 165); that "the continued study of ethnicity is probably worth it, but only if the approach taken recognises that to study it is to bring it continually into being" (ibid.: 189). Banks' agnostic evaluation of the ethnicity of Others informs our own self-evaluations so that such texts share with other readers on ethnicity (e.g. Hutchison and Smith 1996) the fact that not one contributor normatively begins from the premise of his or her own "ethnicity."

With no concept of ethnicity at home and a determination to avoid social class, what is left for Western anthropologists to constitute reflexivity by? One obvious candidate is "gender."

Michelle Rosaldo's article *The Use and Abuse of Anthropology: Reflections on Feminism and Cross-Cultural Understanding* (1980) points to anthropologists' practice of "finding" in the field the political concerns they have developed in their own culture. Hence Clifford's characterisation of Shostak's *Nisa: The Life and Words of a !Kung Woman* (1981) as "a Western feminist allegory, part of the reinvention of the general category "woman" in the 1970s and 80s" (Clifford in Clifford & Marcus 1986:104) and Marshal Sahlins's characterisation of much recent ethnography:

To know what other people are it suffices to take the proper attitudes toward sexism, racism and colonialism. As if their truth was our right-mindedness. Or as if the cultural values of other times and places...were fashioned in order to answer whatever has been troubling us lately. But (I paraphrase Herder) these people did not suffer and die just to manure our little academic fields.<sup>2</sup>

While I criticise a euphemised reflexivity that is not real or reflexive enough, other anthropologists reject this development *tout court*. Paradoxically, there emerges the professional cultivation of an "anthropological self" who champions against the intellectual sin of "categorical error" where:

...it is simply unacceptable...to use any categorical tokens - ethnicity ones, race ones, gender ones...- to shore up our imagined selves. It's just not acceptable to claim..."Look, I have come home!" "I now more fully realise what it means to be a - (fill in the category blank: race, gender, class, ethnic group, national category, even academic specialisation)"...Look at the struggle James Joyce had to emancipate himself from his upbringing in Catholic Ireland. And look at what it is costing Salman Rushdie to declare himself emancipated from his Islamic background.

(Campbell 1987: 196).

Ouroussoff (1993) has drawn attention to the paradox of anthropology as a science allegedly based on ethnography yet which remains enthralled to the fictions of liberalism and individualism. Thus we have the remarkable naivety of sophisticated anthropologists who, by totalising their self-understandings into an "anthropological self," selves that erect careers out of the attempt at understanding other cultures, end up being incapable *as a matter of principle* of understanding the reality of culture among "ordinary" people and incapable of appreciating the fact that "In

---

<sup>2</sup> After-dinner speech to the Fourth Decennial Conference of the Association of Social Anthropologists of the Commonwealth. Oxford, 29 July, 1993.

the industrial West, class culture is the only culture that defines the form of life of many people" (Marcus in Clifford & Marcus 1986: 178).

To ethnographically evidence the reality of working class nationalism is to refuse to frame "Scottish nationalism" in an impressionistic or schematic manner which reproduces what Ortner (1995) has termed "ethnographic refusal." Ortner describes ethnographic refusal as a strategy complicit in "sanitising politics, thinning culture, and dissolving actors" (1995: 176). Before dealing specifically with working class nationalism then I firstly attempt to elicit a quotidian sense of locality and some of the salient structurations present within the particular post-industrial village of Cardenden in order to achieve what Geertz has termed ethnographic "thickness." While Anderson's thesis is a call for the specifically ethnographic study of nationalism, Michael Herzfeld (1997) has observed that in his *Imagined Communities* Anderson:

...does not ground his account [of nationalism] in the details of everyday life - symbolism, commensality, family, and friendship - that would make it convincing for each specific case or that might call for the recognition of the cultural specificity of each nationalism. In that respect, like Gellner (1983), he seems to assume that nationalisms are fundamentally alike in their debt to a common (European) origin and that they thereby represent the imposition of an elite perspective on local cultural worlds.

(1997: 6).

In their preface to *Nationalism* (1994) Hutchison and Smith similarly write:

Given the explosion of ethno-nationalist sentiment and activity everywhere, the need for intensive study based on comparative analysis has become pressing.

The recent upsurge in interest in nationalism stands in sharp contrast to the sharp decline in the literature on social class. At first glance it appears that as an anthropology, nationalism has proved itself superior in its appeal among numerous national populations than the "rival" doctrine of socialism.

Because class is also a matter of structural practice I will argue that working class-nationalism is doubly prone to being mis-recognised by intellectuals as it resists the intellectuals' discursive practices and dominant representations which impute a nature to "nationalism" and a motivation to the "nationalist" which are simply not there, when it does not conflate it with nationalism "in general" or effectively ignores it by allocating it a pigeon hole in some broad historico-schematic sweep.

While the theoretical relationship between class and nation is a central problematic in the literature on Scottish nationalism (Wallerstein 1979, 1980; Nairn 1977, 1981, 2000; Gellner 1983; Foster 1989; Dickson 1978, 1989; Kendrick 1989; McCrone 1989, 1992, 1998; Emmett 1982), more or less coincident with the political triumph of neo-liberalism has been the retreat from class analysis by academia so that the ethnographic challenge of representing "working class culture" in 1999 has an obvious political dimension. During fieldwork I was struck by an article in *The Daily Record* newspaper (Friday January 15th 1999) which reported a speech the Prime Minister had given to the *Institute for Public Policy Research*. It said:

Tony Blair read the last rites for Britain's working class yesterday and said: "I want to make you all middle class".

When we are all middle class an ethnography that constitutes itself in relation to the task of constituting the nature of being "working class" in 1999 and articulating working class "culture" is unavoidably immersed in the "politics of representation." While I do not deny the rise in living

standards among the working class or that locals have more material wealth than their grandparents would have dared imagine, I argue this does not mean a process of cultural “embourgeoisement,” and that to imagine an increase in disposable income means “becoming middle class” is an error based upon the inability to concede to the cultural realm its own substantive reality, and it is here that this ethnography hopes to shed some light. Writing about the articulation of class and nation within the comparable ethnographic area of Welsh nationalism, Emmett has noted that:

...the core of the inland Welsh community consists of male manual workers and their families [so that]...class struggle, to a large degree, manifests itself in nationalism.

(in Cohen 1982: 172-3).

Further:

All their resentments as working-class people against the ruling class, as country people against the towns, as ordinary people against powerful officials, are poured into the Welsh-versus-English mould and give strength to the battle which it would not otherwise possess.

(in Cohen 1982: 166).

This ethnography not only argues “class” is far from dead but that its continuing vitality is now expressed via “nationalism,” and indeed is largely responsible for the politico-historic events of 1 July 1999 i.e. the restoration of the Scottish parliament. Gellner’s observation seems to have been borne out:

Only when a nation becomes a class, a visible and unequally distributed category in an otherwise mobile system, did it become politically conscious and activist. Only when a class happened to be (more or less) a ‘nation’



did it turn from being a class-in-itself into a class-for-itself, or a nation-for-itself. Neither nations nor classes seem to be political catalysts: only nation-classes or class-nations are such.

(1983: 121)

Because an investigation of class is an integral part of uncovering “the social bases of nationalism” (Gellner 1983: 113), Gellner argues that to become a nation-state again, “Scotland” must first become a class. How this has already happened and is set to continue is what I will ethnographically evidence in what follows. Kapferer (1988) has similarly insisted that nationalism is so real because of its indisputable ability to embed itself in various classes and histories. Similarly Wallerstein writes:

I believe ‘class’ and what I prefer to call ‘ethno-nation’ are two sets of clothing for the same basic reality. However, it is important to realise that there are in fact two sets of clothing, so that we may appreciate how, when and why one set is worn rather than the other.

(in McCrone 1992: 56).

For Wallerstein “class” refers to the world-wide capitalist economy whereas “class consciousness” is essentially a national and culturally specific localised phenomenon.

Broadly speaking I argue that the “lost left” identified by Howell (1986) is being “saved” by working class nationalism. When 74% of Scots in 1992 identify themselves as being “working class” and 76% in the same year expressed a desire for some form of Home Rule or outright independence (*vide Bennie et al* 1997: 102 & 155), we are required at least to enquire whether Scottish nationalism is a form of class consciousness. Confirming the confluence of class and nation David McCrone, the leading sociologist of Scotland as “stateless-nation,” has written:

One can see the recrudescence of ethno-nationalisms in industrialised states as an expression of class consciousness of lower caste groups in societies where the class terminology has been pre-empted by nation-wide middle strata organised around the dominant ethnic group.

(1992: 56-7).

An important implication of arguing Scottish nationalism is fundamentally a politics of class, is that any attempt to grasp the present as history is doomed to ethnographic failure if it does not exhibit an adequate grasp of working class structuration. While I am aware that the term "working class" is often described as obsolete and an analytically unhelpful reifying term (Holton & Turner 1989, 1994; Clark & Lipset 1991; Pahl 1991 & 1993) and Meiksins Wood (1986) has detected a "retreat from class," I retain the term when writing about a social group who are traditionally described in the social science literature as especially subject to definition by the objective social relationships they enter (Goldthorpe & Marshall 1992; Marshall 1997; Devine 1997; Bourdieu 1998).

Fundamentally I take a Durkheimian view of social class as articulated by Lee (1994) i.e. a view of class as a "social fact" in contrast to the economism of the Marxist tradition which has often impoverished discussions of class and, however inadvertently, contributed to a naïve belief that with an undeniable relative rise in material affluence there should be a corresponding decrease in the analytical usefulness of class analysis (e.g. Calvert 1982; Clark & Lipset 1991 and Saunders 1990). I use the term "working class" as an introductory phrase to the real question of investigating what it means to be working class in Cardenden in 1999. "Working class" is a useful term precisely *because of* its popular connotations of essentialisation and reification. While I accept the objections these terms imply against using the term must be taken seriously, I argue such popular connotations of essentialisation are



inevitable given the fact of being structured / related in a certain fashion over a number of generations within the same village setting.

### **Locality, Kinship & Nationality**

Anthropology's increased interest in nationalism is confirmed by Herzfeld's study *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation State* (1997) where he advocates the special relevance of anthropology's ability of achieving theoretical purchase on the popular appeal of nationalist discourse:

[Anthropologists] have at last begun to do what most appropriately falls within their competence, directing their interests to the experiences of citizens and functionaries rather than to questions of formal organization.

(1997: 1).

One of the major benefits of an ethnographic approach to understanding nationalism is the ability to evidence the link between different "realms of belonging," from the intimate and domestic everyday realm to the national political realm. In Cardenden, belonging is expressed largely through the idiom of kinship (*vide* chapter four, section 4.2). A person belongs because, like his or her mother and father before him, he or she was "born and raised" in Cardenden. Kinship and residence are the means through which belonging is articulated in everyday life. Such metaphors of belonging, which are deployed in the construction of locality, Herzfeld argues in his own particular ethnographic setting are generally an integral aspect of the larger construction of national identity and nationalist ideology.

I suggest that the model of cultural intimacy is a particularly apt concept for anthropologists to contribute to the study of nationalism (as well as other idioms of identity formation), because it typically becomes manifest in the course of their long-

term fieldwork, a site of social intimacy in the fullest sense.

(1997: 3).

Similarly Eriksen has made the point:

Its [national identity's] great emotional power, and its unabashed linking up with the intimate sphere, suggests one important sense in which nationalism has more in common with kinship or religion than with, say, liberalism or socialism.

(in Olwig & Hastrup 1997: 109).

Herzfeld adds "...marginal communities...are often the source of the national-character models" (1997: 7). As a former coalmining village then Cardenden affords an ethnographic site for investigating the *iconicity* which Herzfeld proposes between local and national identity construction, as both draw upon an ideology of "sameness" to mark boundaries of identity and belonging. Herzfeld's insistence that nationalist discourse often "acts out a pervasive nostalgia for "real" social relations" (1997: 8) as part of its effort to claim political legitimacy, echoes A. P. Cohen's point that it is the experience of locality that mediates the experience of nationality:

Local experience mediates national identity and, therefore, an anthropological understanding of the latter cannot proceed without knowledge of the former.

(1982: 13).

It is based upon a sense of agnatic continuity then that Herzfeld's Greek citizens define their belonging to the village and their belonging to the nation i.e. "the basis of the national culture is a society defined, in many instances, by its agnatic continuity" (Herzfeld 1992: 42). Similarly, residents in Cardenden constitute their claims to locality and nationality by standards that cannot be bought or sold or in any way commodified. In other words,

locals constitute locality and nationality out of kinship, length of residence and local knowledge.

Locality is an important aspect of the autonomous cultural reality of being working class in Scotland. Macintyre's study of *Little Moscovs* (1980) makes the point that in small mining villages in Scotland and Wales, the experience of locality was one where residence and work were contiguous; that there was an intense identification of work and residence impossible to reproduce in the larger towns such as Cowdenbeath. In Cardenden, the sense of locality or place was part and parcel of being a local miner. Locality is *theirs*; there is no "them and us" in this dominant sense of local identity and identification with locality so that what might, for example, appear as a remarkable level of class unity during the miners' strike of 1984-5, was in many ways indistinguishable from a village unity and defence of locality (*vide* Coulter, Miller & Walker 1984). Among residents then Cardenden becomes synonymous with being a "working class space." It is naturalised so that people, simply by living and making a living in Cardenden, are working class. This experience of locality lends to the experience of being working class a hegemonic aspect, a sense of secure "ownership."

Similarly, I will argue, the nation too is *theirs*. As the bourgeoisie have vacated locality with the end of the mining industry, so that Cardenden is "theirs" and in an uncontested fashion, so this identification extends to and informs their constructions and appropriations of the nation. As the bourgeoisie have vacated locality, so they are held to have "pulled out" of the nation so that the Conservative Party easily and "naturally" becomes perceived as being "anti-Scottish" (*vide* Agnew 1989; Seawright & Curtice 1995). Another consequence of this class bias is that the middle classes are implicitly accorded the lesser Scottishness of mere physical geographical "accident" and, lacking the working class habitus of language and locality, are judged not to be "equally Scottish." So naturalised are these assumptions that they seldom appear as discourse; seldom require discursive explication.

This naturalisation extends to regional identity. At the first elections to the unitary local authorities in 1995, the Conservatives managed 5.8% of the vote in Fife and failed to have a single candidate elected to Fife Council. Locality in 1995 then was preparing the way for the national politics of May 1997 where the Conservatives similarly failed to have a single MP elected in Scotland. There is then a triangulation or integral fitting together of a dominant sense of ownership or expected hegemony at the village and regional and national levels which is translated into politics.

Another consequence of arguing *the local mediates the national* is to abandon the illusion of "civil society" as either constituting the nation or nursing it through its long exile from statehood. During the strikes of 1921, 1926 and 1984-5, the miners and their localities came into open conflict with "civil society." The civil authorities acted to imprison or fine those "acting in a manner calculated or likely to cause disaffection among the civil population contrary to section 21 of the Emergency Regulations" (Macintyre 1980: 61). This history of civil disobedience and direct action means working class people are often indifferent and, at times of crisis, hostile to what is termed "civil society." In the 1926 strike when Ernie Woolley, a Communist organiser in Fife, declared "Methil is to Fife what Petrograd was to Russia during the Revolution" (ibid. p. 61), and with the mass arrests and imprisonments that occurred in Bowhill, GlenCraig and Lochore etc. when similar mass arrests occurred during the miners' strike of 1984-5 under Thatcher, a tradition of locality was being asserted and defended against an "oppressive" British state and statutory authorities.

Attempts at "re-framing Scottish nationalism" via the analytical prism of "social contract theory" (Hearn 1998, 2000) or "liberal nationalism" (Tamir 1993 & MacCormick 1996) then are of little ethnographic or theoretical worth. By safely returning Scottish

nationalism to the history of social contract theory Hearn divests Scottish nationalism of its ethnographic and class reality. Parenthetically, it is possible to argue Adam Ferguson's concept of "civil society" was invented to facilitate the disappearance of Scottish nationalism by convinced unionists. Much of the argument to follow is concerned with showing that, in contrast to Nairn's characterisation of nationalism as the bourgeoisie inviting "the masses into history" (1981: 340), Scottish nationalism is about the working class inviting a reluctant and essentially unionist bourgeoisie into playing its part in the creation of Scottish history and an independent state.

In my own ethnographic analysis of Scottish nationalism I make use of Marshal Sahlins's (1976) critique of pre-anthropological and pre-symbolic understandings of culture to highlight unionist political rhetorics and their characterisation of the *status quo* as one of nationalist threats to the "integrated economies" of Scotland and England. This in turn illustrates the commonplace practice of naturalising economic reality and the characterisation of nationalism by unionist politicians as "*teenage madness*" (John Major) or "*corrosive poison*"<sup>3</sup> (William Hague).

### **The Anthropology of Scotland**

In her article *Crossing a Representational Divide: from West to East in Scottish Ethnography*, Nadel-Klein (1997) reviews anthropology's reproduction of the traditional Highland / Lowland divide in Scotland and the failure of anthropology to seriously engage in anthropology "at home" due to the persistent preference of anthropologists to do ethnography in remote rural areas which are unrepresentative of the lives of the vast majority of Scots (*vide* Littlejohn 1963; Cohen 1987; Macdonald 1997). Nadel-Klein writes:

---

<sup>3</sup> William Hague, (then) leader of the Conservative Party; Party Political Broadcast April 30, 1998.

This failure of coherence in Scottish anthropology is due, in some degree, to our own localised - and regionalised - ethnographic practices in researching and writing about Scotland.

(1997: 88).

An obvious consequence of the rural bias in the anthropology of Scotland is the absence of ethnographies of the working class. Apart from an investigation of social stratification by Sissons (1973) in Falkirk and that of Turner (1984) in an east coast fishing village, so under-researched by anthropologists has the Scottish working class been that the only published precedent for this study I am aware of is Daniel Wight's study *Workers Not Masters* (1993) of Slammanan. Still relevant then are Harvie's comments. There is:

An unlovely 'third Scotland' sprawled from South Ayrshire to Fife...old industrial settlements that ought to have been evacuated and demolished...but were preserved...Somewhat isolated, ignored, lacking city facilities or country traditions - even lacking the attentions of sociologists.

(in Wight 1993: 1).

As for the central belt deserving the attentions of anthropologists, it is instructive that when trying (successfully) to secure Prof. A. P. Cohen as a supervisor for my research in this "unlovely third Scotland," he advised: "Of course, you know you can forget about a career in anthropology."<sup>4</sup>

That Scotland was an independent nation during the medieval period is *the* single factor that enables the naturalisation of independence as a goal. I will argue the construction of nationalism then draws upon three centuries of "absence." The attempt to politicise three hundred years of history from a "proletarian" perspective is to identify a veritable cast of mythical characters representing a myriad of historico-economic and



political forces. Hence, what was fought for in the wars of independence is re-symbolised and up-dated in the current movement for the regaining of independence as the opportunity to humiliate in a systemic and final way, vicariously: the bourgeoisie, the English, the Anglo-Scots, the Tories etc. and any other historico-symbolic 'enemies'.

Locals' own symbolic construction of history and the nation draws upon the "fact" that the middle and upper classes throughout the modern period have invested their energies in a British identity and have thereby, from a working class and increasingly nationalist viewpoint, implicated themselves in an "anti-Scottish" discourse from which they are having difficulty extricating themselves.<sup>5</sup> The business community in the shape of *CBI Scotland*, for example, have been portrayed in the Scottish media as in league with right-wing Conservative unionism. The working class then, in championing nationalism *de facto* oppose a business or entrepreneurial ethos identified with neoliberal Thatcherism, become the protector of the nation from an unprincipled coalition of unionist and business interests. This *de facto* congruence is consciously exploited so that nationalism is increasingly becoming a credible signifier of class differences to the extent that it becomes exclusively appropriated by one class only.

It is remarkable that a "social fact" of Scotland is that there is no right-wing nationalism. The construction of working class nationalist "history" centres around the myth of a ruling class betrayal of the nation. Hence the easy identification of aristocratic, upper and middle class business interests as identical with an "alien" capitalist English / British nationalism, and working class Scottish nationalism a matter of constructing a rival symbolic and symbolising community. Suitably attired in period costume then the "myth" is something as follows: the proletariat are the inheritors of the historic failure of the Jacobites as no

---

<sup>4</sup> Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> February 1997.

<sup>5</sup> As the leader of the Conservative and Unionist Party (William Hague, 30 April 1998) described his party's strategy in the soon to be established Holyrood Parliament: "...is to prove we were wrong".

other class is capable of appropriating their historical task; the task of the working class is to achieve what prior historic interests and groups failed to achieve and in achieving the restoration of the nation-state they achieve themselves.

Whatever the historical accuracy of such assertions, in this ethnography I will attempt to illustrate why they are powerful and motivating perceptions in the working class nationalist imagination; where "membership" is to make these symbolic connections between past and present. Working class nationalism then is protean: it can critique modernist ideology as an integral part of its discourse and the failure of the materialist and, I will argue, liberal conceptions of personhood, in favour of re-establishing a different conception of the relations between self and nation and state.

## **Methodology**

In many ways, as a local, an ordinary council tenant and full-time worker for long periods during fieldwork, I was indistinguishable from any other local in contrast to most anthropological research settings. The principal research methodology used throughout fieldwork was participant observation. I have based each of the chapters upon targeted participant observation specifically geared to the topic under discussion. The data gathered as a council tenant in Cardenden Road then forms the basis of chapter three. A systematic effort to get to know locals was attending the weekly meetings of the local history group for over two years and this forms the basis of chapter four. Chapter two on the "worked self" is based upon prolonged periods of working full-time during fieldwork. Chapter five is based in particular upon door-to-door interviews with residents (which involved knocking on approximately 450 doors) from selected streets from each area of the village in the immediate aftermath of the Holyrood election in May 1999. I was keen to exploit the topicality of the new parliament via this door-to-door survey as indispensable to obtaining *discourse* on politics (and much else besides). From my other

areas of participant observation, it is clear that as a topic "in itself," politics is a subject seldom discussed at length.

Other ethnographic sites where I systematically attempted to get to know the local population included attending various public meetings; attending a *Mothers and Toddlers* group in the local Corrie Centre with my daughter Candela; attending the weekly prayer group of St. Ninians and, as part of a liturgical community and attending weekly coffee mornings, these proved invaluable sources of local knowledge and perspective. Drinking regularly in local pubs at the weekends, principally the *Number 1 Goth*, the *Railway Tavern* and the *Auld Man's Shelter*, and more generally, shopping locally each day and reading the local Fife newspapers, attending computer classes in Bowhill Center etc. all helped inform the ethnography to follow.

### **Structuration Theory**

As mentioned, regarding the difficulty of constituting the autonomous reality of working class "culture," it seems working class subjects are defined by their separation from any form of substantive "tradition." As opposed to the production and inheritance of a literature, an architecture or some other obvious defining quality, what there is are defining *relations* and it is these relations, the product of modern industrialisation and now de-industrialisation, that constitute the reality of being working class. I argue a shift is required to a *structuralist* conception of social reality, which needs to be combined with a focus upon "interiority" in order to reconcile two points to emerge from fieldwork:

1. informants' spontaneous assertion "There is nothing here"

and,

2. the intuition that this "nothingness" possessed real substance.

The journey of discovering the appropriate analytical framework stemmed from many informants' refusal to concede what for them would have amounted to a facile connection between their lives and the unfolding historic political process in 1999. Many refused point blank to see the new Scottish parliament as anything other than "a waste of time." During this early stage of fieldwork I felt compelled to abandon my research questions and attempt to formulate a new problem, which was to capture what it means to live in a place where what the political and "chattering classes" considered the most important political event in 292 years was dismissed as a waste of time. This required a theoretical perspective in which the unique and historic could be made to appear the subject of habitual response.

The common-sense prejudice which follows from the dominant Western belief that "knowing is looking" can only conclude that because there is little to see, there is therefore little for the ethnographer to come to understand and explain about Cardenden. The problem of constituting the "what" to represent in this kind of ethnography is further complicated by the process of de-industrialisation. The researcher thus can not even unproblematically fall back on notions of class and working class subjectivity.

Tracing the production of nationalism within this particular working class field was fundamentally problematised by the fact that many of the younger people no longer constituted the subjectivity of class of yesteryear and informants were far too honest to pretend otherwise. Cardenden residents, I found, are not enthralled to any ideology of "class purity" by which they might construct a nostalgic backward glance. This characteristic synchronic structuration problematises *what* could be the cultural content or *quiddity* available that could be mobilised in the production of nationalism. If not from substantive cultural traditions, then from what "stuff" is Scottish working class nationalism being drawn from?

McCrone (1989, 1998) has argued that Scottish nationalism, as opposed to that of other Western stateless nations such as Wales or Quebec, is characterised by a weak cultural basis as a possible source of a united Scottish identity. As well as the obvious historic division between Catholicism and Protestantism and the Highlands and the Lowlands, this also reflects I believe the *class* provenance of Scottish nationalism, as it reflects the absence of the need for a production of "Scottish culture," normally the preserve of the native bourgeoisie, and often deemed necessary by intellectuals for the successful construction and mobilisation of nationalism.

Informants are ruthlessly real and structural and therefore "current." The challenge of seeing something was resolved by adopting a structuralist perspective while at the same time not producing the illusion of a local substantive culture. The problem of how to produce something from nothing was solved by a move to a *relational* and *interior* definition of reality such as advocated by Sapir:

The true locus of culture is in the interactions of specific individuals and, on the subjective side, in the world of meanings.

(1970: 151).

By a "structuralist" approach I mean to indicate my broad agreement with the methodological points made by writers such as Levi-Strauss (1963), Raymond Williams (1977), Pierre Bourdieu (1998) and Peter Caws (1997) who by emphasising "*the real is relational*" (1998: 3) warn against a "substantialist" reading of social reality whether of individuals, classes or generations in favour of a structuralist approach that "*one could call relational in that it accords primacy to relations*" (1998: vii). Caws similarly argues for a structuralist approach to social reality and defines the "*most general insight of structuralism...is that the elements of the*

human world are constituted out of the relations into which they enter" (1997:249).

The theoretical position then of this ethnography may be stated thus: *relations generate "stuff" or reality; not only what is present to the subject to be experienced but also the reality of their subjectivity and its meaning.* A structuralist theory of meaning is able to explain the following paradox: while working class individuals are the least culturally pretentious and the social group most concerned only with "bread and butter" issues, they are the least likely to invoke any idea of the person as a variant of *homo economicus*.

I argue culturally defined priorities such as kinship obligations are of greater importance among working class people in Scotland in 1999 than the fiction of *homo economicus*. Because of the dominating relations of class, the wage-capital relation, they exhibit *necessarily* an anti-economistic ideology and leave the substantivist ideologisation of *homo economicus* (and any other species of substantivism for that matter) to the economically successful and socially consecrated middle classes (*vide* Bourdieu 1984; Ouroussoff 1993). To truly grasp a structuralist point of view is to understand that such an approach is capable of capturing the reality of working class subjectivity; of grasping an ontology via an ethnographic practice which:

...should begin to make the cultures we study intelligible to us through the terms in which they are meaningful to their members, rather than by attempting to isolate their putatively 'objective' manifestations.

(Cohen 1987: 3).

Because human social reality is structural / relational I systematically develop the obvious conclusion: the working class are the "most real" social group because they are the most structured. I attempt to illustrate this via an analysis of locality, nationality and the working class self. I argue such an approach and understanding is able to break definitively



with *homo economicus* and why it can achieve this break *really* where other theorisation or ethnography achieves it only rhetorically or morally. In a sense, to grasp this point is to grasp all there is to grasp about the working class.

Because the working class are the social class who are "incapable" of substantivist pretensions to their reality, who more than any other social class have been reduced to the exigencies of the wage-capital relation, they have therein developed and lived a history of overcoming the fiction and ideology of *homo economicus* by explicitly anti-economistic practices. They are "incapable" of substantivist illusions regarding social reality not because of some immutable "nature," but precisely because their structuration under capitalism has also necessitated another real and opposing structuration i.e. a praxis of co-operation and solidarity. Finally, because this is *lived*, is a matter of practice, there is little need to represent or theorise it, far less to discursively contest the fictions of *homo economicus* as "reality" takes care of itself.

Among locals it is rare to see meaning articulated as *discourse*. It was because of the lack of nationalist rhetoric, even among SNP voters, that made me ask how locals' nationalism might be constituted. This question set me on the road to realising their nationalism takes its "substance" from the various (class and national) relations they inhabit as opposed to being sourced in, for example, a discourse of values linked to, for example, civic society, civic nationalism, democracy or a democratic deficit.

I will also argue that this standpoint enables the ethnographer to grasp a history of misconception and misrepresentation of the "nature" of nationalism. I argue that when studies of nationalism define it in terms of an *ideology* linked to a subject-position called "nationalists," this reification of social reality and of individuals' subjectivity has the effect of disappearing and misunderstanding working class nationalism.

What must be communicated in an ethnography of the working class then is the existence and reality of their structuration; to establish its integrity and why Cardenden, or anywhere else in central belt working class Scotland for that matter, are social spaces where substantivist approaches to meaning, self or nation are hard to come by.

### **The Body and Work**

While the theme of "the body" as a site for the "cultivation of self" within late capitalist discourse has a growing presence within the social science literature (Featherstone 1991; Foucault 1986), such genuflexions to the change in how the body is experienced as a source of self (*vide* Taylor 1989) are of little help in illuminating the embodied nature of much of working class experience. Analyses of the cultivation of the "body beautiful" as a marketable self caught in a semiotics of commodity fetishism, and not part of an enforced responding to material social conditions, are of little relevance. As Connerton has observed:

It is true that the body has recently received attention as a bearer of social and political meanings...Frequently what is being talked about is the symbolism of the body or attitudes towards the body or discourses about the body; not so much how bodies are variously constituted...the body is not seen equally clearly to be socially constituted in the sense that it is culturally shaped in its actual practices and behaviour.

(1989: 104).

As a former mining village Cardenden has been at the cutting edge of de-industrialisation. I argue that in conditions of de-industrialisation it is not only a *lack* of substantive cultural tradition in such conditions that produces a sense of "nothingness" locally, but that because so much significance is *embodied*, it is thereby especially vulnerable to being "lost" in the conditions of an international division of labour so that the

disappearance of the "working body" is further achieved and we have the situation where:

...in practically all Western economies today the majority of manual jobs are performed by foreign workers. Thus the labouring body has been displaced from current consciousness and is not merely separated from the consuming body, which exists in its own right, but does not even stand next to it as an alternative conceptualisation.

(Lyon & Barbalet *in* Csordas 1994: 52).

If we can conceive of "...the human body as the link between the nature and the culture present in all human activities" (Blacking 1977: v) then a focus on labour or work is necessary. In contrast to previous ethnographies of working class experience (*vide* Beynon & Blackburn 1972; Willis 1981; Beynon 1984; Bostyn 1990; Wight 1993; Charlesworth 2000) I propose in chapter two to constitute the "worked self" as vital to any account of working class structuration and, by implication, to detail its impact upon constructions of "the nation."

Marcel Mauss appealed for social scientists to study the working classes in order to grasp the "*total man*" by arguing:

*In reality, in our science, in sociology, rarely or even hardly ever...do we find man divided into faculties. We are always dealing with his body and his mentality as wholes, given simultaneously and all at once. Fundamentally body, soul and society are all mixed together here.*

(1979: 24-5)

Despite this long-standing aim, the ethnographic challenge of articulating the human geography of the "worked self" has only a marginal presence in ethnography (Levine *in* Diamond 1979; Lyon &

Barbalet in Csordas 1994; Dinerstein 1997; Rantalaiho & Heiskanen 1997) and reaches to the heart of the failure of anthropology to produce what Marshal Sahlins in *Stone Age Economics* (1974) has called an "anthropological economics." Sahlins argues that if we can conceive of the cultured self (and within this I include the "worked self") we shall possess an integral part of an anthropological economics with which to begin to contest what Mary Douglas (Douglas and Ney 1998) has identified as the poverty of Anglo-Saxon anthropology i.e. *homo economicus*.

The substantivist-formalist debate within economic anthropology can be considered a dress rehearsal for the end-of-modernity / postmodern debate within anthropology to establish whether anthropology can credibly contest the anthropology of industrial modernity. The task of achieving an "anthropology at home," especially of the working class, the creatures of industrial modernity *par excellence* and arguably, in an *a priori* sense, the social class least likely to mourn its passing, is fundamental before we begin debating whether we are in conditions of post-structuralism or postmodernity. The fact that so many social scientists propose this shift without completing this prior task reveals this deep enthrallment of the bourgeois gaze to the cultural logic of *homo economicus*.

Loic Wacquant's attempt to "*capture the positive moment of pugilism*" (1995) highlights some of the problems of method for an ethnography of locals' world of work and how it informs constructions of self, as well as how the ethnographer can respond to the challenge of *writing* about such issues. As boxing and manual work are predominantly working class activities and occur in "working class spaces," they require from the ethnographer the ability to discourse upon embodiment. It seems instinctively we can posit that someone who can understand the pugilist point of view at some level must also come to terms with the point of view of class and physical labour.

Wacquant's aim is to understand how his informants' praxis of boxing "*affects their life and self*," the assumption being that what one does affects what one is. Yet this obvious point is often obliquely denied among informants as a way of denying the significance of unimportant work *for the self*. Low-paid manual workers, in those rare moments when they actually advert directly to their work, will often say of their jobs: "*Ach, it's only for the money eh?*" or some similar disclaimer, as if claiming exemption from the isomorphism of doing and being because what they do is simple or unskilled; as if because something is unskilled or is something "anyone" could do, then this kind of practice or work does not affect the self that accomplishes it every day. What seems to be communicated is that:

1. the work is *obviously* not important so its lack of importance need not be actually said.
2. it *obviously* therefore has no important consequences for the self.

Because issues of low status and a mediated sense of failure often surround these issues, contained within the remark of the manual labourer quoted above is the suggestion the self is not implicated in any inferior social status in any real *personal* sense. It is often psychologically impossible for discourse on a "worked self" to emerge explicitly in ethnographic conversations because manual work is surrounded by wider negative social judgements. A certain moral pressure then is exerted upon the ethnographer not to look at the *coping* that is in fact going on.

When people deny the affect work has on their identity / personality it can be presumed in an *a priori* fashion that they will not be inclined to articulate a concept of a *worked self* through fear of arriving in their minds at a "failed self." In addition to a widespread antepredicative predilection for "disappearing" failure in late capitalist culture, there is

also a physical aspect to disappearing the effects of work / labour from the consciousness of the worker. As Connerton has noted:

[I]ncorporating practices...provide a particularly effective system of mnemonics. However, *sui generis*, this suggestion is very difficult to back up with direct evidence since incorporating practices...are largely traceless and that, as such, they are incapable of providing a means by which any evidence of a will to be remembered can be left behind.

(1989: 102).

From my own experience of having worked as a day-labourer lifting potatoes and as a production-line agricultural worker at *Kettle Produce* (Fife), co-workers routinely experience such hard work as intensely boring and strenuous. Because of the often frenetic nature of the actual work, there is a sense at the beginning and throughout a shift of a necessary "suspension of the self" as one gets on with the job. One resumes one's personality or individuality only when the work is finished; when one is free of supervision and can anticipate a period of free time. However, despite psychological "suspensions of the self" the physical body must accustom itself to the work it does. The body develops calluses to hide future work as work; to mask the work being done from the body the better to get it done efficiently. Rather than a perpetual becoming of this worked self anew day after day, nature intervenes to prevent this Heraclitean-come-Sisyphean perpetual *becoming* in favour of a stable and substantial bodily habitus of muscle and skin. A stable being-in-the-world or ontological callus, beginning with the surface inscription of the callused skin, is effected until producing an ontological condition or "callused grammar" (upon which "the nation" is often also inscribed in the form of tattoos) which lets the worker achieve a certain forgetfulness of his or her being.

We might say that the body develops its own subconscious; that that which is rendered unconscious is so because it has already been



achieved, and once achieved can safely pass into the subconsciousness of embodiment or physical structuration where it remains awaiting and available to the worker. As the scholastic definition has it: *habitus est quo quis utitur quando voluerit*.<sup>6</sup> Paradoxically then, because the callus is the unconsciousness of the body, the true sign of a worker is a certain unconsciousness of his embodied habitus and intentionality, where the bodily habitus disappears the data of itself, its own history of effort and sweat.

However, while admitting this stable bodily adaptation, seasoned manual workers all recognise that the body, even after only a few days holiday, needs to re-adjust and work through the initial stiffness in the first days back at work. Working bodies then are *continually* related to work and are continually structured by it, and this structuration never wholly returns to the unconsciousness of "nature." In my own experience workers constantly, if indirectly, either talk of their own bodies or listen to the discourse of fellow workers on their worked bodies. They invariably know someone off their work because of a bad back, or a problem with a limb etc. due to the daily wear and tear of physical effort. Working with *East of Scotland Water*, often the first question to be asked by a workmate on a Monday morning is "Are ye fit then?"

### ***Labour-In-Itself: An Impossible Concept?***

As with the body, so there develops what might be termed calluses of the mind (*vide* Dirks 1992) where the mind similarly "disappears" the work of representation of objective socio-economic conditions once habituated to them. An important consequence is that there is no need for discourse on the worked self among workers because nothing is lost by this. Further, because possessing the integral self is not jeopardised by the absence of its theoretical articulation because it is an embodied condition, similarly there is no single discursive "native point of view" to arrive at. In an article entitled *The Inarticulate Mind* Hastrup writes:

---

<sup>6</sup> Habit is that which one can exercise at will.

...the 'recessive body' has an analogue in a 'recessive mind', that is the unknowable processes of understanding that takes place within the self. The recessive mind is part of habitus. 'The *habitus* - embodied history, internalised as a second nature and so forgotten as history - is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product' (Bourdieu 1990: 56).

(in Cohen & Rapport 1995: 183).

Given the *de facto* dominance of work simply in terms of its consumption of time, any predilection for non-representational thinking about the "worked self" will have far-reaching consequences for establishing the autonomous reality of working class culture. While the body may disappear its structuration and need not pay anything for this disappearance, can such a "strategy" hold for areas of life (such as politics for example) that require conscious pursuit and representations of self and others?

While taking on board Willis's insistence that labour "is the main mode of active connection with the world: the way *par excellence* of articulating the innermost self with external reality. It is in fact the dialectic of the self to the self through the concrete world" (1977: 147) it remains there are real difficulties stemming from the fact that the "work experience" cannot be analysed or represented directly.

In answering Mary Douglas's (1998) question as to what possible source can afford the anthropologist with a vantagepoint somehow outwith the modernist paradigm (which postulates *homo economicus*), something to be avoided is the *labour theory of surplus-value* definition of "exploitation" in favour of an embodied *culturalist* approach. I locate here a necessary break from an economism at the heart of so much thinking about the working class. The surplus-value theory of exploitation need have no cognitive relevance for the worker since

culture can make such a definition of exploitation disappear whenever it judges the wages "are good," as is often the case. Norton's critique of the "tenacious myopia in the sociological imagination" (1984: 427) derives from his frustration at the traditional dismissal of non-materialist / *homo economicus* inspired political behaviour among the working class as "false consciousness" on the part of Western intellectuals. He points to the fact that "the logic of material interests" means that with "good wages" among the working class, the only possible or true basis for class-based mobilisation is at an end; on the *homo economicus* theory of materialist anthropology, working class politics in the West must end by the late nineteen-fifties as with the advent of the affluent worker (*vide* Bell 1960), what else is there for class consciousness to constitute itself by?

As well as a break from economism, something else that must be avoided is a "humanist moralism" which can posit the following problematic *vis-a-vis* ethnographic study of the working class:

*The astonishing thing...is that there is a moment - and it only needs to be this for the gates to shut on the future - in working class culture when the manual giving of labour power represents both a freedom, election and transcendence, and a precise insertion into a system of exploitation and oppression for working class people.*

(Willis 1977: 120).

Whatever the good intentions of a particular author, when the manual giving of labour power is couched in such terms as "exploitation" and "oppression," much of the issues involved stand pre-judged and there is little theoretical space left for the experience of manual work to "speak" for itself; such goodwill effectively colonises an aspect of working class being for the bourgeois gaze so that, paradoxically, it remains a *terra incognita* within anthropological writing.

In the attempt to achieve an "anthropology *from the body*" (Csordas 1994) and to evidence a realm of reality located within a set of learned postural / bodily behaviours, I adopt as a first principle Maurice Blondel's (1893) position on human subjectivity i.e. that there are no divided or fragmented selves; that the self is already *given* and *integrated*. While the worker is traditionally represented as alienated from the products of his labour and the commodities he or she produces, one "product" of his or her labour that he or she is never alienated from is himself or herself: the *worked self* re-constituted each day. Hence while I recognise the value for example of Lyotard's *Libidinal Economy* (1993) and its attempts at achieving the long-delayed turning to the real working class subject via the desire to integrate Marx and Freud, this attempted synthesis is never achieved due to the dissumulative power of another trope present within his work i.e. the "end of the subject."

My own view is that regardless of whether we characterise industrial modernity as the moment when "the economy" reached its escape velocity from tradition or any controlling humanism, the manual labouring body remains wedded to itself (*vide* Schwimmer 1979) i.e. integrated to itself so that the break with the problematic of alienation (which I applaud) is no crisis event for the worker (and need not be for their ethnographer), and least of all signals the end of the subject or the special structural relevance of the working class.

While the effects of the wage-capital relation are undoubtedly important they are also one of the least "showable" aspects of working class structuration. Exemplifying the long-standing philosophical debate regarding the reality or otherwise of universals such as the idea or universal "humanity" abstracted from the existence of real and always individual men or women, the universal "worked self" exists nowhere, but only really in its innumerable incarnations. Similarly with work "itself," one doesn't simply "do work" but always does something in particular; one builds a wall, unblocks a main sewer, sorts vegetables on a conveyor belt, picks potatoes on one's stent or digs foundations etc.

Work is radically individual and personal even though it is also an experience perceived to be shared. But while the experience and evaluation of work is clearly not the same for everybody, is not an inherent quality or thing *in itself*, this does not mean how it is experienced or what its meaning is can be whatever each worker (or ethnographer) volunteers it to be. With Aquinas then we can refine this classical Aristotelian position by insisting the mind legitimately abstracts the always-individual universal labour-in-itself concept (i.e. the *reducio*; *vide* section 2.2) from the nature of “things” themselves i.e. manual workers.

Reflecting on my own work experience I identify with the need identified by Lutz to attempt to “link the cultural forms of emotional meaning with much broader political and economic structures” (1988: 7) as part of a wider critique of various reification strategies in our thinking about emotions while recognising “The relationships among the physical, the mental, and the emotional are some of the thorniest tangles in our conceptual forest” (1988: 9).

To lose ownership of the means of production, the classical statement of political economy regarding the structural fact the working class must live with, implies loss of control over one's body. Necessarily, in selling one's labour one enters into a set of social relations. Because of this, over the generations one's being-in-the-world is constituted from a definite perspective via kinship and locality long before one begins work i.e. “pre-labouring” socialisation patterns preclude forever the existence of one reified source and “structure of feeling” (Williams 1977), such as the “point of production.” With the advent of industrial class society after the eighteenth century, a life of labour engendered particular lives of feeling which created and still enforces wider cultural stereotypes so that:

...it is the dominated members of this social system (such as women, children and the lower



classes) who are primarily defined as experiencing emotion, both in general and to excess.

(Lutz 1988: 65).

Work and the "worked self" are structural realities par excellence. The effort to conceive of a worked self then pays homage to Aristotle's revolutionary insistence (against Plato) that only the singular has real being; only the singular is real. When to this philosophical difficulty is added the fact that working class groups have traditionally been incapable of substantive reflection about their own conditions of being, we can understand why the theoretical articulation of a generalised "working class self" is so problematic and, in my view, has been able to resist adequate conceptualisation.

A theoretical counterpart to Bartolomeo de las Casas's complaints in the 1540s as to the excessive burdens placed upon the native populations of Latin America by the Spanish conquistadors is Taussig's recent call for anthropology to "push the notion of hegemony into the lived spaces of realities of social relationships...in the warm space between the arse of him who rides and the back of him who carries" (1987: 288). While Comaroff (1985) has articulated precapitalist conceptions of work among the Tshidi in southern Africa, there is no articulation of ontology and labour as Sahlins (1976) has called for. A simple schematic of pre- and post-contact conceptions of work is not achieving the heart of the matter. As Nash observes:

...most discussions about class...put the conditions observed in a set of propositions the theoreticians would derive if they were experiencing those conditions. This does not always (or perhaps ever) coincide with the ontological propositions of the men and women in the work setting. Even notions of poverty, of excessive labour...are relative to a theory of what the worker should get if he were justly compensated.



(1993: 321).

For the worker and ethnographer then understanding the meaning of embodiment or labour is not some single act of paying attention or rising to consciousness. Rather it is a cumulative evidencing of a "bodily intentionality" that is capable of evidencing and knowing itself pre-conceptually; making it exist as data before the mind of the worker or ethnographer who comes to wonder at and construct it in the order of discursive representation. In his *Theses on Feuerbach* Marx argued:

*The principle defect of all materialism up to now...is that the external object, reality, the sensible world, is grasped in the form of an object or an intuition; but not as a concrete human activity, as practice, in a subjective way.*

(in Bourdieu 1977).

But where in Marx is the analytical grasp of labour "in a subjective way"? Given the absence of such a categorisation of working class experience it seems that Willis is correct when he writes:

*Marx...never explains how labour power comes to be formed, subjectively inhabited, and given to the production process in a certain way. There is almost a sleight of hand in the conceptual use of the reserve army of the unemployed to explain the ideological obedience of workers.*

(1977: 179).

The task of conceiving how labour is "subjectively inhabited" may also be psychologised as in Trist and Bamforth's article *Social and Psychological Consequences of the Longwall Method of Coal-getting* (1951) where they are content only to hint at the issues:

*The degree of stress arising when men experience the full weight of this situation could have been explored only in a therapeutic relationship. But many instances were given of*

neurotic episodes occurring on shift - of men sitting in their lengths in stony silence, attacking their coal in towering rage, or leaving the face in panic.

(1951: 30).

There is no work experience "in itself" as this experience is always incarnate i.e. subject to time and is only ever experienced not by a labourer "in general" but by a labourer in particular with his or her own particular history and body as his or her own embodiment has its own history. The day-labourer sweating in a field at eight o'clock in the morning, knowing he or she has another seven hours ahead of him or her, experiences the "moment itself" not as a universally accessible moment at all but in a context of a shift pattern, a day and a weekly routine.

To say the effect of hard work is physical fatigue, while true and obvious, such a trite truth is a poor conceptual return for an activity that dominates the lives of so many; that ordinarily mediates the manner of how the worker lives in his or her body and experiences his or her relationship to society throughout adulthood. In chapter two then my aim is contradictory i.e. to reify "relationality," a particular condition of relatedness. My aim is not to reify working class subjectivity so as to erect a stumbling block or invent some secret ingredient X, but to achieve conceptual purchase on the inevitable polymorphism that is *any* subjectivity. The ethnographic task is to name and bring the experiencing of the world of workers' embodiment and intentionality to the level of the concept, not to enslave informants or their ethnographer in fictive "totalisations" but produce an appropriate vocabulary.

### **Embodiment**

Why the working class self can be described by Mauss as particularly able to illustrate the integral fusion of "*body, soul and society*" is due to its peculiar structuration. It is due to the particular relatedness to his

or her environment (i.e. his or her structural vulnerability in a cash economy) that makes the lived reality of his or her structuration intensely personal, embodied and determining. In her ethnography on emotion, Lutz has written that "[T]he notion of intentionality plays a central role in our view of the nature of individual responsibility [wherein] if one is overcome by the material conditions of the self, which include emotions, responsibility is diminished" (1988: 63).

From observation in the field it is clear that locals, especially men, in a communal social setting often exhibit a distinctive aggressive / affective edge to their behaviour; practice a certain "libidinal economy" of expression. I was often struck by the intuition that beneath their linguistic behaviour is a deep "structure of feeling" being sublimated, suggestive of Freudian psychology which, along with its view that it is work that binds individuals to reality, holds that the *ego* is the "reality principle" which sublimates the instinctive drives of the *id*<sup>7</sup>. Trying to elicit something of the depth of this fusion of embodiment and expression Blacking has written:

...some somatic states may also help a generalised collective consciousness to emerge, and from these feelings, rather than rational assessments of the perceived situation, a more specific class consciousness can develop and serve as the basis for political action.

(1977: 6).

When subjectivity is released from prior codes of constraint, and when this release is often championed by popular culture, the *ad sensum* modality (*vide* section 2.2) is similarly released and given unprecedented licence. As an ethnographic site then for witnessing what may be termed "the *id* in identity and ideology," the pub as a traditional workers

---

<sup>7</sup> The "Id" is described as the seat of Eros, the sexual life drive, and Thanatos, the death or aggressive instinct. In the Platonic philosophical tradition, and in recent writers such as Iris Murdoch (1992), *Eros* provides the motivation for the search for truth.

environment provides an obvious location for witnessing performances of socialised subjectivity and "identity talk" with an emphasis on the embodied and relational nature of identity and ideology (*vide* Parker *et al* 1992). I explore this particular theme in chapters two and five.

### **Outline of Thesis**

To evidence local working class structuration I highlight various points during fieldwork where "something," as in the shape of discussing "History" or the local production of *communitas* for example, was attempted. I have followed Victor Turner's methodology of taking specific events which constitute "a limited area of transparency on the otherwise opaque surface of regular uneventful social life" (1957: 93).

The difficulties experienced by the ethnographer in how to think about working class experience are shared by the people themselves in their difficulties in identifying the existence of a working class tradition in conditions of de-industrialisation, under-employment and welfare state provision. It seems that for both the ethnographer and locals, the existence of a working class "culture" is easier to discern when looking back, for example, to the inter-war years of economic and political struggle and the heyday of locality (*vide* chapter four).

In chapter one I argue that the reproduction of structuration, the reproduction of participation in a "community of fate," can be seen in the failed attempt at communal remembrance. It is only then that the *ad hoc* nature of such attempts becomes transparent. What is also "seen" in these moments is the existence of limiting pressures and their structuring force. But for the failed attempt at curating remembrance, a basic structuration would remain unconstituted. The reproduction of a basic structuration, or participation in a community of fate, happens via the attempt at community at the *Fun Day* where only the attempt reveals the lack of community. On this occasion a lack of community literally

makes a spectacle of itself. Again, without this attempt it would not constitute itself or exist to the extent of failure.

Chapter one focuses on decline in public space and points to two different aspects of this 'decline of locality': the *economic* deindustrialisation and shift to service sector employment, and the *cultural* changes since the nineteen-fifties, and how these shared circumstances have differently affected the older and younger generations. I attempt to convey the effects of deindustrialisation as well as the impact of fragmenting cultural pressures.

What has declined sharply as a direct result of the end of coal mining in Cardenden is a village-based "public sphere." With the decline of local work or only the opportunity of insecure semi-skilled work and a resultant permanent crisis in the reproduction of a culture of sociality for many, the ethnographer of this de-industrialized space is faced with an obvious yet intangible "nothingness", and fieldwork can begin to feel like a treadmill of chasing memories of a passed "something."

Macdonald has noted that in Scotland "much social life goes on behind the closed...doors of family homes" (1997: 17). In chapter three I argue the reproduction of a basic structuration or participation in a community of fate, can be glimpsed in the process of contesting an anti-social neighbour. Again, only via the attempt at constituting neighbourliness are the hegemonies which constitute particular lives made visible, and one sees that they problematise fundamental structures of relationship such as neighbour relations.

Only by being drawn into this anti-social space was I as an ethnographer able to gain insight into the existential ground of neighbours' experiences and so begin to suspect the reach and nature of working class structuration. These experiences would have been missed by data gathering solely by means of interviewing, as much that is actually 'going on', as opposed to "merely happening," cannot be or is not said directly.

Writing of the difficulty of taking "direct and explicit consciousness" as a guide to "deep play" (Geertz 1993) of cultural significance, Willis observes: "Survey methods, and all forms of methods relying basically on verbal or written responses, no matter what their sophistication, can never distinguish these categories" (1977: 122) i.e. the categories constitutive of working class consciousness. More generally, while clearly to find out locals' views on the events of 1999 one must conduct interviews and ask questions, it became clear that "asking questions" was too blunt an instrument in uncovering significance here.

Chapter three also develops the argument that there is an analogy between home rule at a domestic level and home rule at a national political level:

1. *Analogy of Temporality*: Each structuration develops over time. Reification, whether of neighbours or nations as the Other, does not happen overnight but is a cumulative response to living with "difference" over months and years. I draw then a temporal analogy between the eighteen months of fieldwork spent in 51 Cardenden Road and the eighteen years as a working class Scot living under the Conservative government from 1979 to 1997.

2. *Analogy of Structure*: There is an analogy of structure between *housing conditions / anti-social neighbours* and a *politics of class via nationality* as each issue consists of two points.

In regard to housing:

1. the relational / structural point is poor soundproofing.
2. the substantive point is "difference" i.e. anti-social neighbours themselves.



Each on their own can not constitute a problem. Anti-social neighbours are only anti-social when brought into relation with others. The problem is not being related *per se*; the problem is being related to "difference."

In regard to politics:

1. the relational / structural point is the political union of Scotland and England.

2. the substantive point is "difference" i.e. voting differences in general elections since at least 1979.

Each does not generate a politics of class via nationality on its own. The substantive point of "difference" is only possible because of Scotland's relation with England. Again, the problem is not being related *per se*; the problem is being related to "difference."

3. *Analogy of Othering*: I argue there is an analogy between the cognitive codification of "difference" and the structuration that this effects within i.e. there is an analogous mapping of perceived "difference." Just as informants will say of an anti-social neighbour, "She's rough as fuck; the hail family's rough as fuck", so *vis-a-vis* national difference they say things like, "The English are no happy unless they're oppressin somebody" or "Ah hate the English; they're aa arrogant cunts."

4. *Analogy of Solution*: When faced with the prospect of "difference" *ad infinitum* as a permanent condition (itself a reification of time), there is an analogy in regard to the proposed solutions of ending "difference" i.e. eviction and independence. Because locals judge the problem, whether it is "number 57" or "England" in essential terms, they recognise the impossibility and "injustice" even, of expecting something not to be what it is, so that the only solution is to prevent further relationship.

Because neighbours see it as unreasonable to expect Fife Council to spend thousands of pounds sound-proofing, effectively re-renovating their flats, or expecting a lifestyle conversion of a particular neighbour, or "England" not to be "England" anymore, so they see it as unreasonable for them to refrain from being themselves i.e. to accept and put up with continual disturbances or "Scotland" to refrain from being "Scotland" or expect it to vote for the Conservative Party, so the only rational solution is eviction and / or independence. To evict difference is to maintain an integral self via a necessary construction, maintenance and exercise of "sovereignty"; to want independence is to maintain a nation's integrity. Again, it is not "difference" *per se* that is problematic, it is being related or united to "difference" and the necessary ceding of identity / Self that becomes intolerable.

In chapter four I argue the reproduction of a basic structuration or participation in a "community of fate," happens also via attempts at "studying history." What is revealed is an alienation from history as a "live" and unfolding process. Spectating this reproduction of a structuration normally kept hidden from view is possible as a spectacle in the shape of the local history group archives being inaccessible. Having no plans to preserve it for future researchers, I criticise their *de facto* determination to inaugurate a break locally between "then and now" as symptomatic of the caesura they instantiate between the local and the national level of history in regard to the events of 1999. Something of this was forcibly impressed upon me when I spent an afternoon with local mining historian Dam Imrie and saw so much documentation from the local *Mining Archives* and small stacks of literature relating to the miners' strike of 1984-5 gathering dust in his damp and crowded outdoor wooden hut. The inability to hand down meaning reaches literality where even the minority interested in local history prove incapable of the transmission of "tradition." Structuration scenes like these reproduce the fatalism for which resignation to the impossibility of constituting a tradition "here and now" in Cardenden represents a species of wisdom.

Despite what post-structuralist fashion may dictate, an ethnographer working in the Scottish central belt must find a way of speaking and writing about a working class "essence." The most thoroughly "anti-essentialist" view of social identity does not dispense with the need to explain *the appearance* of substance. Because relations generate "substance," one must account for the production of *substantive* selves via structuralist insights. This is what I will try to do in particular in chapter two which draws upon Connerton's (1989) idea of "bodily memory" and the work of Lutz (1988), Blacking (1977), Ruby (1982) and Wallman (1979) on emotion and embodiment in the attempt to come to grips with "working class subjectivity" as a necessary preliminary to the politicisation of this class subjectivity in chapter five.

If there is a relative lack of reflexive *discursive* practices among locals, a focus on *practice* (*vide* Ortner 1984) is the obvious way to overcome this. It was to try and focus on practices such as production-line work to enable me to observe locals and share their daily practice, that I took jobs as an agricultural labourer at *Kettle Produce* and as a sewage operative with *East of Scotland Water* prior to and during fieldwork as a means of "fleshing-out" the fundamental interpretive idea of *embodied discourse*. In this I have tried to instantiate the following point Cohen has made regarding ethnographic methodology:

...if one's ambition is for the intimate knowledge which is afforded by genuinely participant observation...One has to acquire the idiom of the locality, and then learn within it. The acquisition of the idiom is the starting point for investigation.

(1978: 6).

A search for quiddity or "something" is most obviously answered by work. Work is a central category in the attempt at articulating the autonomous sphere of working class culture to the extent that, just as the local without a job is in crisis, so the ethnographer without a grasp of the

structuring relevance of work and its ontological condition is unable to grasp the cultural sphere as an autonomous force and is, whether aware of it or not, in a perpetual "theoretical" crisis. It is in the work experience that I locate a fundamental element of working class structuration and locate a "grounding point" upon which I establish a positive conception of working class subjectivity and establish the autonomous realm of working class culture/structuration. Crucially, Wight (1993) did not work during his fieldwork and so was never able to identify the substance of much of working class experience. Hence his somewhat "impressionistic" account of Slammanan 1984.

Of his ethnography Wight writes: "The picture of Cauldmoss culture is painted with a broad brush...In a sense, then, this ethnography only provides the background for a fine-grained analysis that should follow" (1993: 9). What follows then is the attempt at such a fine-grained ethnographic account of a similar Scottish working class location. To make this claim credible I was keen to do as locals do i.e. work. Credible participant observation meant spending a lot of time working outside Cardenden; specifically with *East Of Scotland Water* for five or six months each year in 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000.

I recall spending the day of the state opening of the Scottish parliament (Thursday, 1 July 1999) in Ironmill Bay outside Dunfermline replacing worn scrapers in two final settlement tanks. Working with Paul, Adam and Stevie, we stopped for dinner at twelve noon and tuning into *Radio Forth*, heard the announcement that the Red Arrows and Concorde were about to fly over Edinburgh. I remember us scrambling to vantagepoints in the plant and being lucky enough to get a clear view of the aircraft flying over the Forth on what unexpectedly and suddenly became a memorable summer day.

Whether as a result of conviction or indifference, as regards the political events of 1999, it was clear early on in fieldwork that for a number of

informants a return to the *staus quo ante* would be acceptable. To write an ethnography on working class nationalism is also to give a voice and presence to working class unionism. It is also to have to engage with indifference and apathy towards politics. While I separate the chapters on indifference and nationalism, I want to avoid unnecessarily dichotomising these differences as *both* spring from reacting to the same changes in structural conditions (i.e. de-industrialisation and consumer capitalism). In a sense nationalism too is a species of indifference to a certain erstwhile dominant politics.

A salient point made by Marcus in his discussion of Willis's ethnography of the northern English working class is that of the ethnographer confronting the problem of "...having to invest richness of meaning in "thin" cultural forms purely generated by responses to capitalism" and as someone who "...strains to invest positive meaning and richness in a cultural form that seems entirely oppositional" (1986: 178-9). This problematic is very familiar. I agree that the working class in general exhibit an oppositional stance *vis-a-vis* much of hegemonic culture while they themselves remain an integral part of this reality.

Spencer (1990) makes the point that anthropologists such as Obeyesekere (1979, 1981) and Tambiah (1986) exploit the acknowledged shared epistemological ground with the nationalists they write about, but which they also employ so as to challenge many of the assumptions of their nationalist informants. I certainly also wish to exploit shared "epistemological ground" with the reality of being working class as a local myself and apply to myself Emmett's comment:

The fact that I have been living in rather than studying Blaenau, have been my own informant as much as an ethnographer, I count as an advantage.

(in Cohen 1987: 1).

I am very much "writing within" (Spencer 1990) a shared national and class identity, and in trying to articulate and "defend" the reality of working class nationalism, is to evidence its cultural logic. Perhaps it is unavoidable that because working class nationalism is a political strategy its ethnographic representation is also caught up in the politics of reading and reception. While I unavoidably criticise then *New Labour*, for example, to view this ethnography simply as political critique is to render what follows tedious in the extreme and of little ethnographic worth. I can only state that it is because I attempt to articulate working class nationalism, attempt to make it theoretically and ethnographically "visible" in its own right, that I critically address certain political strategies that "disappear" or mis-recognise the culture this ethnography aims to articulate.

Something else I readily concede is "male bias." There is a ubiquitous sexual division of labour and social space in Cardenden, something I believe characteristic of working class Scotland. My reflections on work predominantly emerge from an all-male environment having been employed with *East of Scotland Water* as a manual operative. I can only hope a more "inclusive" representation will some day follow to supplement the one presented here. Moreover, I am equally aware that a possible criticism of this ethnography is its lack of a sense of Cardenden "itself." This has been a deliberate choice on my part however, as I feel that to represent "the heart of the matter" is to present a portrait of Cardenden that reveals its essential iconicity with the many other villages of central and West Fife. If someone were to judge that the ethnography presented here could just as easily be about Kinglassie, Lochgelly, Lochore or Ballingry (and a dozen others), I would be more than happy.

Spectating the historic events of 1999 turn nine generations of yesterday's wisdom into today's "foolishness" was *the* event of fieldwork and remains the paradigmatic event that taught me process reveals structure. Chapters one to four detail other 'lesser' sites locally where attempts at 'process' reveal working class structuration; each instance



reveals that any one aspect of structuration, such as the work experience for example, borrows much "of itself" from other sites of structuration (*vide* Purcell 1982). Structurations structure other structurations to produce an "integral self" (*vide* chapter two).

Finally, I want to identify myself with the following point made by Jonathan Spencer:

Many years ago, at a seminar at the University of Edinburgh, I remember Jimmy [Littlejohn] commenting that in order to attempt the task of anthropological comparison we should aspire to 'become coeval with our own history'.

(*in* Ingold 1990: 21)

I adopt this as my motto in what follows as I believe that "If anthropology cannot enlighten the complexities of its own national contexts, then it is impotent and trivial" (Cohen 1987: 17). I believe the ethnography to follow has succeeded in grasping and outlining the fundamental structure of working class nationalism in Scotland today. Whether this claim is justified or not is for the reader to decide.

# The Crisis in the Reproduction of Locality

The only thing Cardenden is handy fir is  
Glenrothes an Kirkcaldy.

Hugh Young  
(Retired Miner)  
2 May 2000

The present-day village of Cardenden in central Fife grew from the early medieval parish of Auchterderran and is comprised of the areas of Auchterderran, Bowhill, Cardenden and Dundonald and has a current population estimate of 4,980.<sup>1</sup> The name Cardenden is derived from the royal medieval forest or "den" of Carden.

Although locals to someone unfamiliar with the area will describe themselves as coming from Cardenden, among themselves residents routinely identify themselves as coming from the particular areas of Bowhill or Dundonald. From a vantagepoint such as Craigderran, a raised ridge of some one hundred feet at the northern boundary of Cardenden, known locally as "the Craigs," one more or less has a panoramic view of the full extent of the village. Looking immediately

---

<sup>1</sup> Fife Council population estimate for 1998.

south from this vantagepoint is the area of Bowhill which contains the bulk of the population and the main shopping area of the village. Looking south and to the west of Bowhill is the public park beside which is the recently landscaped area of football pitches where Bowhill Colliery once stood. Here also was the large "pit bing" where the refuse of the colliery was piled over the years and which was only levelled and removed during the nineteen-eighties. Further west, beside the area named Annfield, remains the large deposits of fine coal from the "coal washer" which is still in the process of being removed and, eventually, will be similarly landscaped.

Further south of Bowhill over the River Ore, which rises in Loch Ore to the west, is the area of Cardenden which slopes upward so that its various streets are clearly visible from Craigderran. The top of Cardenden is bordered by Cardenden Woods and fields through which runs the main road (the A92) connecting the larger towns of Glenrothes and Kirkcaldy to the M90 motorway to the Forth Road bridge to the south and Kinross, Perth and the north of Scotland to the north. Looking back from the top of Cardenden, the view is dominated by the Bishop, West Lomond and East Lomond hills which dominate the Fife landscape. South of Bowhill and to the west of Cardenden is the area of Dundonald which is separated from Cardenden by a deep ravine, part of Carden Den, and from Bowhill by a short steep hill. Further south of Dundonald is farmland and a further thirty minute walk south along the medieval pilgrim route (for travellers making their way north to St. Andrews), one can see the Firth of Forth estuary and, across this stretch of water, Edinburgh.

Much of the land of the parish of Auchterderran belonged to the Boswell family of Balmuto in the neighbouring parish of Auchtertool. This family held the patronage of Auchterderran i.e. the right to appoint the parish priest, for over four centuries until patronage was abolished in 1874.

In 1475 Fr. Robert Boswell, "a man of great piety and learning" (*Auchterderran of Yesteryear* Vol. 4: 36) was parish priest and resided at Easter Bowhill on the farm still called *Parson's Mill* where he cultivated the land. One of his descendants, Fr. Alexander Boswell, is described as a "favourite" at the court of James IV who accompanied the king to the battle of Flodden, where both were killed in 1513 in the struggle against the "tactics of disruption and destabilisation" (Lynch 1991: 163) pursued by the English king Henry VIII. Another link with the medieval past are various street-names such as "Kirkshotts Terrace." As one of the local history group's booklets explains:

*Each parish had its Bowbutts and at Auchterderran...under the instruction of the parish minister every male from sixteen years to sixty had to fire at least six bowshots every Sunday after the service at the targets set up at the Bowbutts...We know that the Bowbutts of Auchterderran were in use in the 13th century for Alexander III who met his untimely death at Kinghorn in 1286 regularly used the Bowbutts there and it was he who gave the name Kirkshotts to the farm there where his young boars were trained for hunting. The Bowbutts were still in use in 1513 for it is recorded that many men trained at the Bowbutts of Auchterderran fell at the Battle of Flodden.*

*(Auchterderran of Yesteryear; 1989:53).*

For the majority of locals, however, there is little sense of local history going back to medieval times. The 'retrieval' of the medieval past by the "powers that be" was recent and deliberate. It was only after World War II that the streets of Cardenden, which until this point reflected the rush of industrialisation and the advent of coal-mining, had been simply named First Street, Second Street, Third Street etc. up to Nineteenth Street.

When the railway came in 1848 to improve coal transportation the station was named Cardenden in preference to Auchterderran, and from the 1950s onwards Cardenden has been used to refer collectively to all areas of the village. For the overwhelming majority of locals, Cardenden and local history begins in 1848 with the arrival of the railway and 1895 when the *Bowhill Colliery Company* began sinking the first shafts of Bowhill Colliery. This latter event signalled the explosion in population and house building which created the area of Bowhill from former farmland.

By 1918 the population of the village exceeded 7,000 and continued to grow until the nineteen-fifties. By the time of the Bowhill Pit disaster in 1931, when ten men lost their lives, the population exceeded 10,000. Since the 1950s at least, the population has been steadily declining and we have to go back to the 1901 census for a population figure (3,154) smaller than today's estimate.

As early as 1908 a miner from Ayrshire (Andrew Fisher) in Australia became the first Labour Prime Minister in the world (*vide* Devine 1999) and since 1910 the member of parliament representing Cardenden has been Labour.<sup>2</sup> The year 1918 is significant because it saw the creation of a predominantly working class electorate in Scotland and it is beginning with the inter-war period that saw an unprecedented politicisation of the local population (*vide* Arnot-Page 1955; Skelly 1976). The following excerpt from the socialist newsletter *The Call* provides a glimpse of politics at the time and of the activities of John Maclean (1879-1923) who had been appointed Soviet Consul in Scotland by Lenin:<sup>3</sup>

Bowhill. - Our winter campaign (the Victory Campaign) commenced on Sunday, September 30th, with an indoor demonstration of welcome to comrades John Maclean and Jas. D. Macdougall.

---

<sup>2</sup> From 1935 to 1950 the West Fife seat was held by the Communist William Gallacher and a National Liberal candidate managed to win the seat briefly in 1931.

<sup>3</sup> According to one member of the local history group McLean and his family lived for a time in Cardenden and his daughter married a local man and lived in the village.

The latter dealt effectively with the problem of industrial action, and gave a tremendous impetus to the new Miners' Reform movement. A special collection was taken on behalf of the Fife Miners' Reform Committee, by which it is enriched to the extent of £3 6s. 6d. Maclean delivered the first real speech since his release<sup>4</sup>, and roused the audience to a tremendous pitch of enthusiasm by his handling of the Russian Revolution. As a direct result of this meeting we shall have an Economic Class in this village of at least a hundred members, taught weekly by Maclean. The membership of the branch will be increased, and Bowhill will retain the proud distinction of being the storm-centre of the East of Scotland working - class movement.

*The Call,*

11 October, 1917.

The overwhelming and defining forces of industrial capital created a considerable homogeneity among the local population, with Cardenden for many years exhibiting the classic characteristics of the "occupational community" (*vide* Bulmer 1975) such as an intense political solidarity that was expected at times of crisis. I recall the late curator of the *Mining Archives* (Bien Bernard) telling the story of how the eleven miners who "scabbed" during the 1926 strike had their names painted onto the gable end of a building in the Jamphlars area, so that anyone entering the village from the direction of Lochgelly for many years thereafter was greeted with the sight of this "rogues gallery."

While bilateral descent is the formal kinship model it is in fact through the male line that local residents tend to trace their belonging to Cardenden, as it is linked to the massive influx of miners at the end of the nineteenth century. When talking to locals, it seemed as though everyone was able to trace their presence in Cardenden to a paternal migrant forebear<sup>5</sup> because the village is literally an invention of the nineteenth

---

<sup>4</sup> MacLean had been jailed because of his militant anti-war propaganda.

<sup>5</sup> My mother's family arrived as immigrants from Ireland (County Roscommon and Tyrone) in the late nineteenth century. My paternal great grandfather (born in 1870) came to Cardenden



century industrial revolution within the coalmining industry. While the coalmining industry is the original *raison d'etre* for most locals' presence in Cardenden, it is also the heart of the present-day problem: now that capital has withdrawn and the coalmines are closed, "history" itself seems to have run its course and finished with Cardenden. In 1965 the last of the local collieries closed and ten years later central Fife was declared a deprived area with 14.9% unemployment. The unsuccessful miners' strike of 1984-5 for many locals represents the end of a founding identity, of both locals and locality, and the beginning of a ubiquitous sense of crisis management.

In its own way the local history group (*vide* chapter 4) registers this "end of history" or, as its tutor said, of "running out of stuff." Whether it is the local history group, a local prayer group, a local church choir, a church community, a Burns Club, political party or local pub, they fight the same struggle to maintain a "tradition" to underwrite the present community's presence; face the same problematic of how to deal with a ubiquitous crisis in maintaining continuity in radically changed circumstances.

### **1.1 Cardenden Mining Archives 1991 - 2000**

The problem of how to communicate a sense of Cardenden's history, as well as the structural predicament it shares with many similarly placed ex-mining villages in Fife, was a problem faced one particular Wednesday afternoon, 15th March 2000, whilst sitting in front of a blank computer screen. I had thought to begin describing Cardenden by giving a sense of location; by describing how I had moved to a new address within the village that over-looked the main street, Station Road, where prominently in view was the sign above the premises advertising the *Cardenden Mining Archives*. As I had only moved into this house the

---

from Muirkirk (Lanarkshire) in the first years of the twentieth century. His son was to die from the silicosis he contracted while working as a stripper in Bowhill pit. My grandfather was a lifelong Communist and kept a picture of Stalin above his fireplace and, so the family history goes, had learned his Communism from the works of Dickens.

month before, I was able to confirm the suspicion that the *Archives* had closed *before* the death of its seventy-seven year old curator. I had been thinking how the view from my study might be a fitting way to begin describing a sense of how those locals who remember the past of the village themselves were passing; how even the "means" of curating the identity and memory of Cardenden is passing. I stood up to look outside for something like a last look at the *Archives*, perhaps hoping for inspiration to begin writing.

To my surprise I saw the normally drawn shutter was open. I thought perhaps a new curator had been appointed and so the *Archives* had opened again. Having only ever been inside on one occasion, where the premises had to be opened especially for me after I had arranged an appointment, I was keen at the latter end of fieldwork to see the collection of mining memorabilia once more as an apposite ethnographic site to begin to communicate a sense of place and the history of the village.

Stepping inside I felt a sudden sense of loss. I could immediately see the premises had been cleared. As I scanned the walls and floor space I could see all of the memorabilia had gone with only the dark wooden casings and empty display cabinets remaining. At the back was an open door from which emerged Wullie Braid, himself an ex-miner, and the man responsible for establishing and financing the *Archives*, as he was about to inform me, "*tae the tune e eighty thousand pounds.*" Assuming the *Archives* were closing for good, I explained I had been hoping for a last look but could see I was too late. I introduced myself and asked where the collection was being moved to. Mr. Braid told me he would have "*given the lot*" to Fife Council if they could have guaranteed the collection would be displayed; but as they could not promise to do this, he had declined the option of having the collection put in storage by the Council. The collection was being dismantled and parcelled out between a local mining historian (Dan Imrie), the

*Scotspeak* project at the Greig Institute in Leven (Fife), and the rest going “*down to Wales.*”

Unavoidably, standing among the empty shelves and cabinets we talked of the demise of the *Archives*. Wullie identified a lack of interest. The old curator had told me the mistake was not being located “*on the Queen’s highway,*” thereby failing to attract interest from tourists and casual visitors. Finally, I asked about the Visitors Book, to see Dom Helder Camara’s entry and any comments he may have made. Mr. Braid told me to come back the next day when his wife would be with him to pick it out for me.

I returned home to reflect on the failure of this attempt at remembrance. It seemed a familiar tale: a lack of interest; the inability to generate an audience or clientele and thereby a revenue to keep the premises financially viable, made all the more poignant as the *Archives* as a place of memory and local identity was unique in that there was no other comparable effort at memory and representation of Cardenden. For those few years the village had been fortunate to possess such a well-designed and well-maintained venue.

### **1.2 Local Representations: Rorie, Houston, Corrie & Rankin**

With such efforts at representing Cardenden disappearing, other sources of representation of Cardenden are delivered by the works of locals who have directly and indirectly written about Cardenden.

#### **Dr. David Rorie 1867 - 1946**

During fieldwork I became familiar with the work of the amateur medical folklorist David Rorie when I happened to begin reading Buchan’s *Medical Folklore* (1994) <sup>6</sup>. I had purchased the book some three years

---

<sup>6</sup> David Buchan: *Folk Tradition and Folk Medicine in Scotland: The Writings of David Rorie*, Canongate Academic, Edinburgh.

previous, unaware that it was a collection of writings on Cardenden which stretched back to Rorie's arrival to serve as medical officer at Bowhill Colliery in 1894. This was a serendipitous discovery. Buchan writes:

Rorie...was an ethnographer...was the first folklorist in Scotland, and one of the first anywhere, to record the culture of an industrial community: that of the Fife miners.

(1994: 5 & 11).

Rorie explains and illuminates what he views as the universality of many of the traditional beliefs and practices he found among the miners and peasants of Cardenden by referring to the ethnographies of the Torres Straits Islands expedition and the theories of magic articulated by Frazer in *The Golden Bough* (1890-1915). In particular, Rorie established the clear parallel between local peasants' beliefs regarding various diseases and their cure via mimetic magical practices, and similar practices found among Paraguayan Indians (Buchan 1994: 107). However an initial sense of serendipity in reading Buchan's collection of Rorie's works was to end in the suspicion that Rorie in fact was uninterested in his informants themselves or in articulating a native "point of view." Rorie's writings almost consciously take their justification from performing the function of an interesting amusement for his reading public; something textually confirmed by a throw-away remark when, reviewing a case of 'Second Sight' which touches upon the battle of Culloden, Rorie remarks "*case XLVII has no romance in it*" (1994: 188) and so is not judged of interest to his readers.

From such verbal slippage the suspicion arises that Rorie's search for cultural survivals of pre-modernity among the Fife peasantry is framed within a definite historiography and certain historico-cultural assumptions which blind him to a concept of culture that could be anything other than a "romantic" interest in curiosities *when looked for among miners and peasants*. With Rorie, we are asked to take the Whig

interpretation of cultural and national history as 'reality' itself, and view all of the other counter-voices such as republicanism, communism, nationalism and socialism etc. that *were* present among the miners, as romantic nonsense, if not without a certain entertainment value, as opposed to an autonomous cultural realm to be researched.

Especially interesting here is the assertion of an "emic viewpoint" which Buchan judges Rorie to have captured. I question whether such an emic viewpoint was available even to the miners themselves, far less a medical officer turned amateur medical folklorist; whether such a view was possible at all. It seems to me that the 'viewpoint' of miners must be constructed, pieced together, and can not simply be recorded or read off from interview transcripts or house calls as it is not so available, is not a matter of mere discourse.

This criticism of Rorie only holds if it is claimed that Rorie actually studied "miners' culture" as Buchan clearly does. However, there is no attempt at a definition of culture, or of a specific object specific to the miners. Rorie himself tells us:

It is not pretended that all the customs, etc., mentioned were universal. Many of them were dying out, and many more were referred to jestingly, often with the semi-apologetic remarks, 'that's an old freit,<sup>7</sup> that's what the auld folk used to say, or do.' But everything I have set down I have tested as having been at one time or other common in the district.

(in Buchan 1994: 12).

In Rorie's writings then folklore or a "native" point of view is constituted by the existence and searchings for "survivals" characteristic of pre-Malinowski ethnography. This is understandable given that Rorie conducted his research at a time when various customs and beliefs were

---

<sup>7</sup> A superstitious belief.

disappearing due to massive and sudden industrialisation. Whereas Rorie began his fieldwork at the point of transition to industrialisation in 1895, my fieldwork was conducted after Cardenden had been de-industrialised i.e. after the period 1965-1985; and where Rorie sought the survivals of a pre-industrial folklore, I often found myself trying to piece together the "survivals" of the industrial period of 1895-1965<sup>8</sup>.

My intention is not to dispute the pioneering steps Rorie made in recording medical folklore among late nineteenth century miners and agricultural workers, but simply to suggest it is a matter of dispute that Rorie researched something called "mining culture," the miners themselves, as it seems he neither saw nor suspected anything specific in their lives of particular ethnographic worth and in doing this he set a precedent.

**Rev. Archibald McNeill Houston M.A., B.D., J.P., F.S.A. (Scot)**

The Rev. Houston, as a former parish minister, is the local author who is regarded locally as having written the most authoritative and exhaustive history of Cardenden. While Houston arrived in Auchterderran nine years before Rorie in 1885, I believe both men largely shared the same mental horizon.

In his *Auchterderran, Fife: A Parish History* (1924) an account is given of the parish which reads much like a listing of events with very little meaningful connection save that they occurred in the same locality. What is most remarkable is not the historical narrative of Cardenden (which it does *not*, in any case, provide), but the eloquent testimony to an entire cultural outlook which emerges; an outlook which curiously empties

---

<sup>8</sup> Local historians have so far been unable to locate the dates of Cardenden pit which closed *circa* 1920. Bowhill pit closed in 1966; its peak employment figure was 1,544 in 1962. The Minto pit shut in 1967; its peak employment figure was 757 in 1957. The Lady Helen pit closed in 1960; its peak employment figure was 474. The Number 1 Dundonald pit closed in 1961; its peak employment figure was 260 in 1952. Bowhill (Cardenden) Power Station had a peak employment figure of 36 in 1974. Outside Cardenden, Seafield colliery (Kirkcaldy) closed in July 1987; its peak employment figure was 2,472 in 1974. The largest pit (the Michael) in the Fife coalfield had a peak employment figure of 3,099.



history and locality of historical significance. Whether it is achieved via the reduction of the past to the degraded existence of "romance" in Rorie, or the relentless positivism of history as the enumeration of highly selective happenings devoid of narrative meaning in the work of Houston (honorary member of *Ancient Shepherds*, *Free Gardeners* and *Oddfellows*) the reader remains firmly in the "kailyard" of what historian Tom Devine (1999) has called the Scotland of the authoritarian class divided "parish state." By "kailyard representation" I mean the representation of locality as a place where simply there is nothing of historical worth going on as if, anticipating Fukuyama (1989), the movement of intellectual and political history has essentially ended. Thus, Cardenden is made to participate in what Ash has termed *The Strange Death of Scottish History* (1980).

Houston's history frames Cardenden within a certain discredited historiography which the historian John Young has characterised as follows:

Previous generations of scholars in the early twentieth century focussed on a Whig interpretation of history, with history being fundamentally equated with progress, and viewed the Treaty of Union of 1707 as an act of liberation which civilised Scotland and freed her from the shackles of a barbaric past.

(in Broun, Finlay & Lynch 1998: 105).

Throughout Houston's work there is in fact an unstated politics of identity construction and an unstated framing of locality and the present as the natural and providential conclusion to the movement of centuries of history characteristic of the complacency of politico-economic and ideological hegemony identified by Kidd (1993), despite the unprecedented contestation of this hegemony locally. Even before its publication in 1924, Houston's text was an obsolete and obscurantist account of post-1921 strike and pre-Depression Cardenden. A rare

example of what constitutes historical continuity deployed in order to naturalise the 1688 politico-religious constitutional settlement is the following:

*It is, therefore, worthy of importance to note how the Reformers connected themselves with the Lollards and the Lollards with the Culdees, as the Culdees connected themselves with the Waldenses, and the Waldenses with the Apostolic Church.*

(1924: 29).

We have then the extraordinary invention of something called the "Celtic Church" and the imaginary existence of a belief system in contradiction to the orthodox Catholic doctrine of the early Church.<sup>9</sup> It indicates the particular "version" of history I learned that only attending the local history group during fieldwork did I learn of the myth of the Celtic or Culdee church and the "mindset" it is allied to among older secularised 'Protestant' locals. Local Catholics and Protestants then do not simply disagree upon their accounts of local and national history but do so systematically.

Whatever the opprobrium poured on such inventions by scholarship I argue in chapter four that such fictions remain central to identity-formation and the construction of a certain kind of national and local history among an older generation of locals. It is a version of history which results in the inability to represent the cut and thrust of history and a view of history that cannot admit to a prior contestation of meaning, and therefore can only allow its re-emergence into the present-day with great reluctance. This "theological cleansing" of local and national history by Protestant historiography effectively reduces Scottish history to the cultural hegemony of Scottish unionism and the emergence

---

<sup>9</sup> For the historical evidence debunking the idea of a Celtic or Culdee Church in Scotland (or anywhere else) see W. Davies, *The Myth of the Celtic Church*, in N. Edwards & A. Lane (ed.) 'The Early Church in Wales and the West' (1992); B. Hudson, *Kings and the Church in early Scotland*, 'Scottish Historical Review', 73 (1994); K. Veitch, *The Columban church in Northern Britain, 644-717: a reassessment*, 'Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland', 127 (1997); T. Clancy, *Columba, Adomnan and the cult of saints in Scotland*, 'Innes Review', 48 (1997).

of *homo economicus* and reproduces the view characterised by the belief that: "1688 marked a grand turning-point, when 'ancient superstitions' and 'the old theological spirit' were sloughed off, and the 'real interests of the nation began to be perceived" (Beveridge & Turnbull 1997: 67).

Given this exigency within Houston, what is remarkable is the difficulty in locating any explicit statement of interpretation or attempt at rising above the "positivism of details" to point the reader in the direction of narrative, resulting in an interpretive and semantic vacuum; where the history of locality is thus constructed the parish can only ever attain the degraded "romantic" status of being an "*old-world quaint corner of Fife*" (Houston 1924: 12).

### **Joe Corrie 1896 - 1968**

Concern about the correct interpretation and representation of locality is also of great interest to Joe Corrie. From my reading of Corrie's published and unpublished manuscripts, his work is unquestionably the most credible and sustained attempt at representation of locals themselves.<sup>10</sup> Corrie devoted himself to writing of the miners and their families and community during the years of the Great Depression and is best remembered locally as a playwright and the productions of his plays staged by his theatrical group the *Bowhill Village Players* (later to become the *Fife Miner Players*) in the nineteen-twenties and thirties.

Not unlike the works of later playwrights such as Mike Cullen, John Byrne, John McGrath, Hector MacMillan, James Kelman and Peter Arnott in the nineteen eighties and nineties, as a miner and a committed socialist, Corrie understood his role as a writer in terms of class and politics and saw the challenge of writing as one of rendering and

---

<sup>10</sup> See Linda Mackenney (1985) *Joe Corrie: Plays, Poems & Theatre Writings* 7:84 Publications, Edinburgh; Joe Corrie (1939) *Black Earth*, Routledge & Sons, London.

representing the standpoint of miners and their communities. As he wrote in 1933:

I must write about the world I know best, the world of the working man and woman, their trials, loves, hates, suspicions, generousities and loyalties. I feel somehow that - well, it's a contribution - I am doing what I love best for a class that needs it now.

What is enduring in Corrie's work is his attempt to articulate a viewpoint which ranged from politics to aesthetics based upon a *local* and *class* standpoint. This remains an unprecedented ambition in a local writer in its extension of the definition and reach both of class and locality. Still to this day it is only in Corrie that we have "ordinary" people themselves represented in their daily lives and a body of work of real ethnographic worth. However, along with this commitment to "social realism" in Corrie there is also the reduction of the human condition to those aspects of workers' lives that are solely work-related and which leads to a certain 'flatness' in Corrie's writings characteristic of much agitprop literature of the inter-war years; where characters lack psychological depth so that this body of work in general could not be said to equal the likes of a coterminous writer such as Andrey Platonov (1899-1951). There is a certain naivety throughout Corrie's published and unpublished manuscripts that is never able to encompass an historical sensitivity and in-depth representation of human subjectivity and its meaning beyond a representation of the worker as dominated by capital and a pawn caught up in structures beyond his control. Corrie himself wrote that his childhood was "marred by poverty." I would argue that today his work would be seen as never quite able to achieve a full "turn to the subject" and as a direct result his "social realism" is never quite real enough.

**Ian Rankin 1960 -**

In sharp contrast to the political commitment of Corrie is the work of the most recent local author to attempt representation of his natal

Cardenden, Ian Rankin. Beginning with his first novel *The Flood* (1986), whose flyleaf describes it as taking place "over a period of twenty years in the life and slow death of a Fife mining community," in this substantial body of work (twenty novels to date) the over-riding representation of Cardenden is uniformly negative and bleak. While Rankin is the first writer to try to come to terms with post-industrial "nothingness" locally, it is the privatised affair of the lone individual estranged from his native locality. As he wrote in *Knots and Crosses*:

*He drove quietly, hating to be back here in Fife [i.e. Cardenden], back where the old days had never been 'good old days,' where ghosts rustled in the shells of empty houses and the shutters went up every evening on a handful of desultory shops, those metal shutters that gave the vandals somewhere to write their names. How Rebus<sup>11</sup> hated it all, this singular lack of an environment. It stank the way it had always done: of misuse, of disuse, of the sheer wastage of life.*

(1987: 3).

Gone with a vengeance in this body of literary representation is the claustrophobic localism of the couthie "old-world quaint corner of Fife" of Houston; gone is any representation of Cardenden being "the storm centre of the East of Scotland working-class movement" (*The Call*, 11 October, 1917) and any sense of local engagement with history and politics via class, to be replaced by an all-together different naturalisation of locality and locals. As if his own testimony were not enough, in his novel *Dead Souls* (1999) Rankin quotes the following extract from the American novelist Kate Atkinson's *Behind the Scenes at the Museum*:

Once I caught a train to Cardenden by mistake... When we reached Cardenden we got off and waited for the next train back to

---

<sup>11</sup> The fictional "Rebus" character is a native of Cardenden i.e. is a fictional alter ego of Rankin.

Edinburgh. I was very tired and if Cardenden had looked more promising, I think I would have simply stayed there. And if you've ever been to Cardenden you'll know how bad things must have been.

(1995: 358-9)

A place routinely represented as containing "nothing" implies that it be populated by *nobodies*, literally non-entities, who are represented as living "miserable married lives" (Rankin 1986: 148). Any distinctive subjectivity is inconceivable and is therefore neither imagined nor attempted to be brought to representation by Rankin. Where locality approaches such dire proportions the only solution is to leave. Perhaps then, insofar as Rankin sees "nothing" in Cardenden he can not see Cardenden in himself, so that in his fictional *alter ego* of the police detective Inspector Rebus is found the compensating *somebody* who lives in the compensating *somewhere* of Edinburgh. Given such assumptions it is clearly problematic to sustain a career of writing from somewhere so productive of a sense of "nothing," so a question for representational strategies is: if not the people themselves then what "reality" can take their place so as to provide narrative?

Such criticisms I think are justified as Rankin's avowed aim in his Rebus series of novels is "...to explain Scotland to myself, to fellow Scots and to the outside world"<sup>12</sup>. In his debut novel *The Flood* (1986), to construct the credibility of his negative representation of Cardenden, Rankin locates elsewhere (i.e. Paris, 1968) the movement of history and ideas:

*This was 1968. Far away there was talk of revolution and radical change. The world was slipping and sliding on the edge of a new era of communication. Carsden (i.e. Cardenden) slept longer and deeper than most.*

(1986: 24).

---

<sup>12</sup> See interview with Rankin on <http://www.ianrankin.com/interview.htm> (June 2001).



A recurring theme within Rankin's writing is that of an ever-present prospect of a reconciliation within the consciousness of the Rebus character between the metropolitan identity of the 'somebody' with the past self of the village "nobody"; a reconciliation that never happens. The Rebus character is characterised as haunted by ghosts from his past. This theme of identity crisis within his many novels I read as textual evidence of Rankin's unsuccessful struggle to see something in his natal village. Locality and the identities it produces in its sons and daughters in Rankin's texts are not invested with sufficient substance so as to force this reconciliation; instead there is the formulaic theme of "there's nothing here" where, after each brief sojourn to Fife, the hero protagonist removes himself to the metropolitan centre as if it is only there that a life of narrative, meaning and participation in history can unfold.

The kind of "nothing" I suggest the ethnographer must capture is much more interesting and significant than that of Rankin, whose depictions of nothingness I believe owe more to a conceptual poverty that justifies and naturalises, and therefore is unable to seriously engage with, the self that leaves. More seriously for an author who has stated he wishes to "understand and represent Scotland" is that, despite coming from a working class background, Rankin has played no part whatsoever in the emergence onto the centre stage of Scottish literature of "working class literature" that took place in the nineteen-eighties and nineties. In Rankin there is no effort at a *conceptualisation* of the culture he himself was immersed in. If Corrie himself failed to attain a conceptualisation of working class culture, certainly Rorie, Houston and Rankin reproduce this failure.

Reviewing then the four major sources of representations of Cardenden, there is a history of failed conceptualisation of working class culture and locality stretching from 1894 to the present. I criticise these writing strategies to highlight the challenge which the ethnographer faces.

Whereas authors are perfectly free to fail in this task, this is precisely what the ethnographer must achieve.

Perhaps the most salient point to bear in mind is that this tradition of writing is virtually unknown to locals themselves; that Corrie's work is no longer performed and collectively these writers and their texts are a marginal presence at best.<sup>13</sup> In October 1998 at Cardenden public library, I enquired of the librarian, an English woman from Sutton Coldfield, what the library held on Joe Corrie and was met with the reply, "Who?" Interestingly, after having introduced myself and my research topic, she recounted that when her husband, who was working for the Ministry of Defence, was told he was being posted to Rosyth, she said she had replied "Oh good! Moving to Scotland; I'll experience Hogmanay...but nothing's happened!" Thus she reiterated the theme of a local decline of national culture.

Attempting to obtain a copy of Corrie's only published novel *Black Earth* (1939), the only novel about Cardenden and drawing upon local characters and events<sup>14</sup>, involved having to request it on 'Special Loan' from the Bodlean library in Oxford (England). When the text arrived six weeks later, I was not allowed to leave the library with it and, due to the library's part-time opening hours and being restricted to when I was able to go to the library, I could only read *Black Earth* for one hour every Thursday evening. When the date for its return came, as I had not finished reading the text, I had to initiate the process all over again. There is a clear failure then at curating the local literature that does exist as a possible source of local identity that could constitute a history of local writing over four generations.

---

<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, as reported in the 31st May 2001 edition of the *Fife Free Press*, local SNP MSP Tricia Marwick and the 7:84 Theatre Company are promoting a major tour of Corrie's theatre works across Scotland planned for 2002.

<sup>14</sup> I do not consider Rankin's *The Flood* (1986) to be about Cardenden.

## **Work and Locality**

The consequences of the decline in the availability of work in Cardenden are fundamental to any present-day representation of Cardenden and is a constant theme, whether referred to explicitly or implicitly, in this ethnography. Another fundamental condition has been the rise of female employment outside the home after marriage, women returning to work soon after having children, as well as the sharp decline in the birth rate since the nineteen-sixties.

In contrast to trends within sociological thinking that have identified the rise of the 'leisure society' as a consequence of an alleged "end of work" thesis, the fact remains that the necessity of paid employment and its practice, despite such work no longer being available within the village, remain central to the lives of the vast majority of residents. Local residents who are now approaching retirement age often contrast the present condition of job insecurity and under-employment with the 1950s and early sixties where work was comparatively plentiful. I have heard informants, who left school without any formal academic qualifications, say that "at one time you could start a new job every week if ye wanted tae."

Older informants are equally clear that, in contrast to their earlier life-experience, there has been an undeniable sharp rise in standards of living. Hence, for example, the expectation of buying a house, running a car, taking foreign holidays and having disposable income, being able to afford the likes of satellite television etc., are now routine. With the dramatic increase in consumer expectations, the perceived necessity of work and the internalisation of the need to work, in no way has diminished across the generations. With the widespread up-take of tenants' right-to-buy their council houses, the popularity of home improvement is ubiquitous within the village in the shape of conservatories and extensions being built.

While the objective necessity of work then is as real and pressing as ever, the end of Cardenden and locality as an "occupational community" has had many consequences. Often, in any particular street, when talking to older householders, they often remark that their street at one point was "full of miners." In the past, resident's sharing in each others lives was experienced as real, obvious and tangible. Today such householders will often remark they don't know their neighbours or the residents of their street as well as they once did. They are often unsure where exactly many tenants work or will perhaps say "Ah think the boy works in a factory in Glenrothes somewhere."

In the shift from large-scale heavy manufacturing industries to service sector employment, the search for work has become "privatised" and the sole concern of the individual and family involved. Because there are no large-scale employers locally, most residents have to travel outside of Cardenden each day to go to work (to Kirkcaldy, Glenrothes and Edinburgh etc.); thus one's place of work is often not somewhere where one expects to meet and socialise with fellow villagers. Local tradesmen, such as fitters, sparkies, bricklayers, pipefitters and scaffolders etc., routinely travel each morning to Dundee, Edinburgh and further afield for the duration of particular contracts. While they often complain at the length of their working day, there is never any suggestion of refusing to travel such distances when there is no available work closer to home.

Again, with the decline in employment in large scale industries, taking one's holidays is no longer a communal affair and, therefore, an opportunity for maintaining traditional local holiday destinations in Fife or Scotland, but are now a matter of personal convenience and private choice where the individual worker decides when to take his holidays. With the deregulation of the financial services industry in the 1980s, many locals now have non-state pension arrangements and, as an individual, are able to plan for and take early retirement before reaching sixty-five.

With a sharp rise in insecurity of employment and the virtual disappearance of trades apprenticeship schemes for school leavers, no doubt in part due to the surplus of already qualified tradesmen looking for work, and with the parallel rise in consumer expectations, workers are prepared to work long hours, often six days a week, and are constantly looking for overtime and are prepared, and are often required by their employers, to change shifts more or less "constantly." This systematic unpredictability and willingness to work whenever work is available, has consequences such as preventing stable routines which impact upon personal and family and social life.

I recall one young mother-of-three, who has lived all of her life in Cardenden and who travels each day to Edinburgh, remarking she no longer had a sense of living in Cardenden or even knowing her street and neighbours. She felt she spent her life either at work, going to and from work or being in her house, so that her 'connectedness' to the village and even her street suffered as a direct result. I recall trying to arrange to interview one worker, whom I knew to be very articulate and insightful, proved so problematic because he was working "continental shifts" of twelve hours each day in a factory in Dunfermline, that after five phone calls I simply gave up trying to arrange a suitable time for fear of appearing to be "hounding" him. Yet another young resident, Stevie, who works as a heavy goods vehicle mechanic, told me of his having to work six twelve-hour shifts each week as well as having to be on call for emergency cover. He was perfectly aware that these hours were "fuckin mental" and that he hated hardly ever seeing his wife and two young boys of pre-school age. But as he said:

The problem is ye get greedy. Ye get used tae haen five hunder pound in yer pocket every Friday an bein able tae buy whatever ye want. Plus of course, Ah could be shoved on the dole in a week, an we aa ken what the dole's like. Ye've got tae take it when ye can. Ah fuckin hate it, dinnae get me wrong. Ah'm always fuckin knackered, bit the money's guid. It's no sae bad in the summer bit the winter's a fuckin



nightmare. Ma attitude jist noo is Ah'll dae it fir as long as Ah can stick it. Wance Ah cannae hack it Ah'll jist look fir somethin else bit Ah ken the money'll no be as guid.

I found Stevie's attitude was quite common among younger men. Having a recognised skill and a good job, he was perfectly clear that he had to earn as much money as he could, and that he considered himself lucky. Although highly sociable and popular in company, he was perfectly clear about his priorities and when chatting to me, his whole discourse was one of a matter-of-fact stating the obvious "facts of life."

Another traditional and ubiquitous strategy for maximising one's earnings among tradesmen in particular is doing "homers"; this involves doing a particular job for someone outwith working hours for "cash in hand." A more "underhand" means of supplementing income among the unemployed is doing work "on the side" while claiming job-seekers allowance or some other form of unemployment benefit. While this is clearly difficult to evidence ethnographically, it is clear that it is widely accepted, grudgingly by some perhaps, that such practices occur and are part and parcel of surviving the "cash nexus" under difficult circumstances. While it is acceptable to decry such practices in general terms as fraud when in company, what is never acceptable is to inform on any particular individual who is practicing this fraud.

### **1.3 The '45 and '79 Generations**

One of the more fundamental structuring relationships to emerge during fieldwork is that between the generations; between what I call the '45 and the '79 generations: approximately, those born before the nineteen fifties and those born from the nineteen-sixties onwards. I will argue that to understand the ruptures and the continuities in the experiences of locality, society and culture, it is fundamental to appreciate generational differences to understand "working class nationalism." I do not intend



this distinction as static or as something fixed, but rather as a device to frame two poles of a continuum, where what decides whether one is a member of either generation is the degree to which one is able to "identify" with the industrial past or the post-industrial present. For the vast majority of my informants, self-identification with one or the other generation would be quite straightforward.

The primary socialisation of the '45 generation is characterised by a largely stable experience of self, society and locality. In contrast, the younger '79 generation's experience is dominated by the post-industrial information age, the massive importation of commodified culture / meaning, massive mobility, and a simultaneous decline in the ability to produce or even remember a substantial production of locality in comparison to the '45 generation. While the latter look back with nostalgia at a "something lost," the latter are hard pressed to identify their experience of locality as a "something" at all. As Rankin wrote in his debut novel:

He wanted to escape all of this, yet he did not even know what "this" was.

(1986: 91).

I maintain the dialectical view that while across the generations there is a shared non-substantive tradition, de-industrialisation and the effective abandonment or overcoming of many traditional cultural mores, has created an unprecedented opportunity for what I term a new "public emergence of working class reality" (*vide* chapter 5) among the '79 generation, and which accounts for the differences in the experience of public and national space.

It is only now that the local jobs have largely gone that we see the traditional lack of substantivist pretensions with clarity in the younger generation. Stripped of the many bonding relations of locality as occupational community, there is among the younger generation a substantial sense of there being 'nothing' locally and an inability to

constitute the positive meaning of locality. In an important sense Rankin's depiction of Cardenden is predictable and progressive and typical of the '79 generation. In an *a priori* sense, it is likely Rankin's unapologetic and ruthless critique of local absence will be transferred to the level of politics and the nation where this critical spirit will similarly identify and ask questions about another unacceptable level of absence (*vide* chapter 5).

As with this differential experience of locality across the generations, so the experience and the constituting of class experience has changed from one generation to the next because the generations are separated by the unprecedented process of de-industrialisation and the absence of work locally so that to speak of continuity between the generations is problematic.

Deindustrialisation started suddenly in Cardenden with the closure of Bowhill pit in 1965 which caused an immediate and equally sudden decline in population. With the closure of Seafeld Colliery (Kirkcaldy) in 1987, which had provided employment for many local miners and Cardenden residents within the mining industry, the crisis in the reproduction of locality began.

### **The Rise & Fall of the Labour Party**

The end of heavy industry and coal-mining locally also impacts upon the reproduction of social spaces such as the local public house or "pub" and other traditional spaces for mutual association. From this point also can be traced the beginning of changes in political allegiance; in particular the declining support for the Labour Party. It is beyond doubt there has opened up an unprecedented gap between the local working class and the Labour Party in Cardenden since the enfranchisement of the working class in 1918.

In local and national politics Cardenden is part of what are described as the Labour Party "heartlands" as the Labour Party has exercised a virtual

monopoly over political representation at local and national level for at least three generations. Traditionally the Labour Party and trade unions were the institutions that articulated working class issues in their efforts to negotiate for more money and benefits for workers. However, throughout my research, at no time was the articulation of *Scottish* identity, far less its politicisation, ever raised as part of the Labour Party's or the trade unions movement's conception of the interests of the working class. Among the first "post-coal" generation, many question and reject outright the traditional Labour allegiance of their parents' generation. Increasingly in the aftermath of de-industrialisation and the Thatcher-Major years, voting Labour is a matter for an older generation.

How is one to explain this unprecedented indifference to the only political party specifically created to represent the working class?

In broad terms I adopt the view of the American sociologist Daniel Bell (1960) that the ideological Left has been in a state of crisis since its greatest achievement i.e. the creation of the welfare state. Any pretence at "revolutionary consciousness" has firmly remained an inter-war phenomenon to the extent that this highly politicised period in Cardenden's history has become long forgotten even among local history group members. In a local history booklet produced to mark the millennium there was no mention whatever of the activities of Maclean in Cardenden.

In many ways the Labour Party has become the victim of its own undisputed success. It is plausible that the reduction of class interests to purely economic matters has disempowered a generation of the ability to identify or construct "post-material" interests and a class position on wider cultural issues. A perfectly justifiable concentration on wages, conditions of employment and housing etc. which has traditionally defined working class politics and provided the measure of the success of the Labour Party might also explain why, in conditions of relative affluence, its appeal has sharply declined among the younger generation

in whom is instantiated the demise of the urgency of purely “materialist” conceptions of class interests as a pressing social reality requiring political action.

Because of the historic importance of the Labour Party I had hoped during fieldwork to attend the monthly meetings of the local branch. Talking in January 1999 to the branch secretary, Wendy Fleming, to enquire if this would be possible, Wendy's initial response was positive. She asked me to send a letter saying something about myself and my research stressing that I was not actually interested in the party political or ideological aspects of local politics, so much as wanting to observe an obviously significant ethnographic site in the historic year of 1999. Significantly, during this conversation with Wendy I had to address her concerns that I may be "an SNP infiltrator."

In the end I was unable to attend any meetings because Labour Party rules state that only members of the party can attend monthly branch meetings. However, after the general election campaign for the Holyrood parliament I was able to interview a leading office-bearer of the local branch and chairman of the constituency Labour Party, Catherine Robertson, (16 Orebank Rd, 14 November 1999). Having introduced myself and my research topic she invited me into her house and began:

Ah widnae say Ah dinnae like Tony because Ah mean Ah've got a photo taen wi Cherie an that an they're nice people but they're Tories.

*You think so?*

Ah think so.

*You're joking me! You can say that?*

Ah can say there's a part e Tory in them. Aye. Come on noo! They're rotten wi money. Whereas an auld Labour like ma dad who went doon the pit on his hands and knees and voted Labour and a union member all his life; what does he have in common wi Tony Blair?

*You're talking heresy.*

Ah know! Ah know! [laughs]. Ah know. Ah know it's no right but we've aa Ah suppose got they kind e feelins.

*Maybe Ah'm bein naïve but is that no a contradiction?*

Well Tony Blair's faither was a Tory. And at the Labour Party conference, Ah was at the Labour Party conference and Tony's faither was sittin doon, he was still a Tory but he was at the conference. He changed tae a Labour Party member noo. Ah could never change. Ma husband could change. Ma husband could faa oot wi Labour an say 'That's it; Ah'm no votin any mair' bit Ah couldnae, Ah'm one hunder per cent Labour!

*Why do you no vote for the Socialists? The Workers'...*

Nut. You're no telling me Tommy Sheridan's a man worth the voting fir?

*Well what Ah'm sayin is you said it no' me. You said yer leader is a Tory.*

No Ah never said. Ah said he has...

*A bit e Tory in him.*

Aye. Ah widnae say he was a Tory. He's still for the working people but he's for middle England as well. He has to be of course or we would never have gotten in, if it hadnae been for middle England. Scotland alone could never get in, if it hadnae been fir middle England. Scotland alone could never get in under the Labour government; they **have** to have middle England. If we don't have middle England we wouldnae win the general election! Because ye could vote a hunder per cent Labour in Scotland but it takes middle England tae get ye intae power. That's true.

*Do you think Tony Blair's really Labour but he's just pretendin in order to win middle England? D'ye think he's jist being clever?*

He's a very clever man aye.

*D'ye think he's...*

Ah think he's got Tory values! Three year ago, Ah stood oot on the streets an in aa the villages in Fife, Ah went up tae Inverness an Ah went right up north, and especially in Cardenden itself, this jist gien ye one village, at that particular time, Ah could have got a hunder per cent Labour vote. Ah could go oot in the streets today an Ah'll only guarantee you twenty per cent e a Labour vote.

*Ah thought Cardenden was quite solidly Labour?*

Aye, but they're old Labour. And they're left. Ah could name ye a few people e this village who've been Labour voters and members e the Labour Party aa their lives but are weary! Ah shouldnae really be sayin this tae you, Ah hope

yer no gonnae be sayin that Ah said this! Ah'll get shot fae Gordon!<sup>15</sup> Ah'm only sayin what people have come tae me an said, aboot how they're disillusioned. They expect different things, even fae the Scottish parliament.

*So what do you think they're thinking noo? D'ye think they're all busy sayin Ah'll vote fir the SNP noo? They're sayin we're scunnered wi Labour, we're gonnae vote SNP noo?*

Nut! They would never vote Labour<sup>16</sup>, they would rather form a Labour Party.

*Ah heard there was some folk in Cardenden were tryin to have a new sort e Labour party but it fell through because there wisnae much interest.*

A lot e the people, let's be honest, a lot e the Labour voters, they'll only vote, they're no politically minded. They'll vote Labour because, an Ah hate tae say this, bit if ye were pittin a monkey doon there, in this village, the village e Bowhill would vote Labour. Because it's part e a tradition. They dinnae ken any better.

*So you think only twenty per cent?*

There's a lot e people disillusioned aye.

*And you don't think the disillusioned vote is going any place in particular?*

Nut. They would just stay home. Ye'd bound tae watch the polls at the elections fir the Scottish parliament, how the drop was.

*When Ah wis growin up ye voted Labour and that wis it. There wisnae anybody else tae vote for. So where did the Nationalists come fae?*

They're an organised party noo.

*But take some of the headlines in the run up to the parliamentary elections; the Nationalists were runnin neck and neck wi the Labour Party.*

They're a stronger party now because old Labour have disappeared. Although new Labour has got us intae power, it's middle England that got us intae power, it wisane the auld red Labour. The auld red Labour has went by the wayside but there's still a lot e them there.

*But it's this agreed reliance on middle England that maybe the Scots, the Labour voters in Scotland got tired of. That's why independence for Scotland became more popular no?*

*But do you no think now, Ah mean Ah'm Labour one hunder per cent, so ye'll maybe see why Ah'm contradictin masel again, but if the Liberal Democrats had a better leader,*

---

<sup>15</sup> Gordon Brown; member of Westminster parliament for Dunfermline East which includes Cardenden.

<sup>16</sup> I presume Catherine meant SNP.



*everyone of us is a bit e a Liberal Democrat; there's a bit e a Tory and a bit e a Labour and a bit e Scottish National Party in every human being. Because ye want tae get on in life an ye want money and when Labour was Labour years ago everybody was the same; everybody's no the same noo. Aa tryin tae keep up wi the Jones', so that's the Tory part e ye. The Labour part e ye is yer still wantin tae see, yer wantin yer national health, aa yer social security, and SNP is the Scotland at heart. Ah believe in ma ain country. Ah dinnae believe in independence bit Ah believe in Scotland. Ah ken that's maybe contradictin masel again.*

Catherine, in her sixties, shows a remarkable commitment to voting Labour and to the idea of Britain despite being clear in her own mind that she has good reasons *not* to vote Labour. She evidences the central electoral problematic of being Scottish and working class: the difficulty of someone who wishes to occupy a subject-position which straddles two self-concepts; to have her politics reflect her (class and national) identities of:

1. being "one hunder per cent Labour"
- and,
2. having "Scotland at heart."

Catherine is frank in connecting the rise of the Scottish National Party with the "old Labour" vote being disenfranchised or "weary" under New Labour. She is equally frank that the invention of New Labour was a political necessity because of the need to win "middle England" from the Conservative Party to exercise political power. Importantly, she has a clear sense of contradicting herself and in her discourse, attempts to construct four different and conflicting "political selves" as well as supporting a constitutional arrangement and electoral system which she knows is popularly held to have ensured three quarters of Scots were effectively disenfranchised for eighteen years prior to May 1997.

Most of the older generation of Labour voters (to which Catherine belongs) I came to know during fieldwork were quite prepared to understand themselves as being "ordinary five eights" working class people and left-of-centre Labour voters. They were routinely prepared to excoriate the "Tory values" of New Labour but *not* at the price of sacrificing or changing the British constitution; and, presumably, if eighteen years of minority Tory rule and the miners' strike of 1984-5 have not persuaded them from their *de facto* unionism then probably nothing will. But this is not to imply such informants were unaware of the increasing weakness of this stance, for example, on the morning of April 10th 1992 after the fourth consecutive defeat for the Labour Party and the fourth consecutive victory for the Conservative Party.

What I found during my door-to-door interviews following the establishment of the new Scottish parliament is that a clear majority of the '45 generation sincerely identify with Britain at a personal and cultural level to the extent that they would rather speak contemptuously of politics and politicians, and represent themselves to me as indifferent to politics in general, than constitute a different politics that would required them to rethink their cultural and personal identity of being British. This resilient sense of British identity is a product of primary socialisation where, from early childhood, children were literally "schooled" into an identification with Britain and its maritime Empire. As the local history group tutor Anne Mead recalled:

*Auchterderran was my primary school in the thirties... The school had no wireless. I especially remember that. On the day of the launching of the Queen Mary, a pupil was despatched to the lodging of Miss Mackay in Woodend Road, near the school, to await the naming of the liner. Her landlady listened to the launching on the wireless, then the pupil was sent back to school with the name written down and sealed in an envelope. The message went round the classrooms and the pupils were able to pass the news on to their families at*

home, for few people had wirelasses at home  
either.

*Auchterderran of Yesteryear*

Vol. 2 (no pagination)

From such recollections, from the experience of Britain's "Finest Hour" during World War II and the creation of the welfare state, all of these lived realities provided ample class-based reasons and justification for a continued sense of Britishness and *de facto* political unionism to the extent that many do not even feel the need to construct the "compromise" nationalism of devolution. The '45 generation then is the generation that experienced and reaped the benefits of the historic transformation of the British state by the working class in the first half of the twentieth century.

### **The Number 1 Goth**

With the demise of stable employment locally, there has occurred a gradual emptying of local pubs of older men as it has meant the end of the tradition of miners having a couple of pints after a shift. This has resulted in an absolute decrease in the number of people drinking in pubs which have become the preserve of a younger set of locals with an older generation only frequenting pubs or the local *War Memorial Club* perhaps once a week at weekends.

With the same number of pubs chasing a decreasing number of clients, there has emerged the novel need to think about how to attract customers. One such attempt by the management of the *Number 1 Goth* was a "St Andrews Night Extravaganza" at which the folk band *Kinrik*<sup>17</sup> provided the evening's entertainment. Throughout fieldwork, this occasion was one of the very few where an explicitly nationalist and class *ideology* was taken for granted; where the stage was literally set for the production and consumption of nationalist meaning. But this is not to

---

<sup>17</sup> Scots for 'Kingdom'.

imply an easy *party* politicisation of nationalism. Undoubtedly, the “nationalism” being performed was for many a *cultural* nationalism. A number of songs referring explicitly to historical and political events of Anglo-Scottish relations such as the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 that hold a special place within the nationalist imagination, and being preceded by a clearly nationalist commentary by band members (such as reference to the “exiled King” and the “English butcher Cumberland”) does not mean the audience consisted of SNP supporters. Among locals, explicitly anti-English and pro-Scottish sentiments, which an outsider might presume indicated a clearly “nationalist” viewpoint, are in fact not incompatible with political unionism.

On the Sunday afternoon before this particular evening I had sat drinking in the same pub after interviewing the residents of Orebank Road. Chatting with the bar manager (Geraldine Wallace) about how quiet the *Goth* was that day, she informed me she had arranged for the folk band *Kinrik* to play the following Friday for St. Andrews night. There was then the organised attempt at constituting a local calendar of events. This ongoing problematic is one symptom of the larger issue of depopulation and the crisis in the reproduction of Cardenden which extends to problematising the reproduction of time itself where a bar manageress must “think something up” to reverse an historical process of decline, in order to maintain her job and reproduce her own presence to locality.<sup>18</sup>

In the event, a notice of “temporary closure” as of February 2001 was placed in the windows of *Goth Number 1* advising the pub would reopen on “February 26th under new management.” At the time of writing (February 2002) the pub remains closed.

This latest failure in the reproduction of an active meeting place where the reproduction of community is possible was particularly poignant as the *Goth* had been taken into “community ownership” and a major

refurbishment project, made possible by a substantial sum of money from Fife Council and the European Union, had only been completed some months previously. Being an ex-mining area, Cardenden qualified for special funding status and the refurbishment and "re-branding" of the Goth from a traditional working class pub to a more up-market bistro had been the subject of much welcomed attention and positive comment at the time.

### **Politics Without Power: The Community Council**

Attending the monthly Community Council meeting in April 2001 it was announced that the Number 1 Goth was being moth-balled for the foreseeable future because the new management team which had been expected, had failed to materialise. Somewhat pathetically during the course of the meeting, ideas were sought from those present to "save the Goth" from closure. A familiar silence fell of people trying to "think of something". One idea mooted was that it could be used as a community resource "for single mothers." Another idea suggested by the Labour councillor (Margot Doig) was to create a "Rebus Tour" where visitors to the village could retrace the 'old haunts' of Rebus identifiable from Rankin's novels. I could not help but think how ironic to suggest the production of "something" based upon a local émigré's writing career founded upon the voluminous commodification of locality as "nothing."

As if to add to the haplessness the time available for this discussion was brief as there were other matters to be raised; such as the new police constable MacFarlane who was present to introduce himself and advise the Community Council "from now on there will be two police officers patrolling on foot throughout the village"; and a local woman who had come to the meeting specifically to raise concerns over the number of mobile phone masts being sited within the village.

---

<sup>18</sup> Geraldine has since left the village and now lives and works in Oban.



Two days after this Community Council meeting the windows on the Goth were boarded up. To date only the upstairs function room is used once a week by the local pipe band and an upstairs room for free beginners courses in computing.

The practice of involving oneself in the community's affairs via attending the Community Council meetings, for example, itself can lead to a feeling of powerlessness and the production of a resigned fatalism. From having observed "politics without power" during fieldwork, it is entirely understandable why, for example, the Community Council and its deliberations are virtually non-existent in the consciousness of locals. The Community Council exercises little power so that nothing is lost by non-participation or unawareness of its deliberations.

A concerned mother who had come to the meeting armed with information on the possible dangers to health posed by mobile phone masts in populated areas, was quickly given the opportunity to speak and was listened to, but the only action taken was a letter to a local newspaper signed on behalf of the Community Council. The local Labour councillor was quick to point out that Fife Council had no authority in the matter of mobile phone masts. From her comments it was clear that nothing would be done as a result of a resident bringing her concerns to the Community Council.

At the first Community Council meeting I attended (20 May 1999), on the agenda was the subject of the hanging baskets to be erected to mark the millennium. Next there were concerns raised over bus shelters "still covered in graffiti"; at which the local Council representative advised that the work had recently been subcontracted to a private company. In the resultant change in company and establishing a new contract, problems regarding insurance had arisen. He concluded by advising the cleaning work should be done shortly. The next item on the agenda was a status report on a previous suggestion about erecting a public noticeboard for the village. The chairman advised "apparently



it costs too much" and suggested instead procuring "space in a shop window somewhere."

At the end of the meeting there was the opportunity to talk informally. I listened to John Robinson (of whom his wife was quoted earlier as saying "Ma husband could change. Ma husband could faa oot wi Labour an say that's it; Ah'm no votin any mair"), complain about a recent decision by the government in Westminster regarding a change in fishing borders: "It's oor water the English parliament took shiftin the fishing border fifty miles north."

Similarly, at the AGM of the *New Carden Residents Association* at the Corrie Centre on April 28th 1999, where a sizeable number of locals were present to voice their complaints, participation by locals only served to construct disappointment at the level of response from Council officials in attendance; where a familiar perceived lack of response, which the chairman (Wullie Duncan) admitted to being the reason why "a lot of the residents have lost faith in us," itself became a spectacle.

This was the first meeting I attended during fieldwork. What I found remarkable was the meeting's procedure that proved itself ineffective even at constituting itself as a meeting. At the meeting there was a clear separation between the tenants and the "three suits" (as one resident put it) sitting in silence at the top table "cause they must be gittin payed tae be here." Throughout the meeting, those at the table never identified themselves. My assumption was that they were indeed from the Council as I can think of no other reason why "three suits" would choose to be present and harangued by women complaining about bad joinery work. What in fact was happening was organised non-communication and the display of what seemed a conspicuous, even intimate, "hands off" policy by office-bearers and Council employees. The

net result was that there was in fact two different meetings each trying to happen at the same time. The substance of the meeting consisted of obviously unhappy residents each armed with their particular questions but, receiving no answers, resulted in a frustrating experience for those involved in the meeting as it served to raise expectations, and therefore evoke frustration and a sense of powerlessness.

Unlike ordinary meetings the AGM was well publicised throughout the village and, understandably, residents attend with a view to voicing their concerns. But, typically of AGM's, the real business of such meetings from an organisational point of view is the election of various members to executive positions within the Association. Inevitably there is a clear unresolved dialectic which constitutes the meeting where residents voice their concerns while the 'managers' of the meeting insist such concerns are not the business of an AGM. Such are the frustrations of local politics for many people.

On a separate occasion, speaking to a local resident (Peter Paterson) employed by Fife Council as a tradesman to carry out repairs to the local Council housing stock, he complained of those officials in charge at an executive level who themselves do not live in Council houses or in areas of Council housing. He complained they are in no position to identify with Council tenants as it is only the poorer locals unable to afford a house of their own that are in any way interested in their deliberations.

The historic decline in the practice of local politics from being something assiduously cultivated and 'competed' for among local professionals as part of a devotion to civic life, to its present form of a Community Council of pensioners or over-worked volunteers backed up by popular apathy is striking. It is a direct result of a long and gradual process of divesting locality of executive political power and increasing centralisation of power away from the local level. As Harvie has argued: "The abolition of parish councils in 1929 heralded forty years of indifference to local democracy" (1998:

141). This change is another facet to the different experiences between the '45 and '79 generations where "society" as much as "locality" has been transformed.

#### **1.4 From the Society of Scarcity to Scarcely Any Society?**

After dinner on New Years Day 1999 walking through the village with friends visiting from Spain, we passed the local branch of the *Royal Bank of Scotland*. Its windows had been smashed some time the night before during the Hogmanay celebrations. As the street was quiet I took a picture. Two young boys on their new bikes stopped and stared. "Are yous tourists?" one of them shouted in our direction. "No" I replied, rather self-consciously, to which he asked: "So why are ye takin photos then?"

Walking further up *Main Street* I met a young woman whom I knew from the *Mums & Toddlers* group to which I took my daughter Candela on occasion. I motioned for Eva and her friends to go on ahead while we chatted. I wished her a happy new year and, as she was five months pregnant, we fell to talking about babies and hospitals and such like. She told me she had just had her second scan at Victoria hospital in Kirkcaldy and mentioned X's wife "hid a second abortion yesterday as the doctors hid diagnosed *the bairn had somethin wrang wi it.*"

Living in Station Road above the *Caspian* takeaway was to be privy to witnessing the petty violence of locals. When putting Candela to bed one evening I heard a screech of tyres outside on the street. I peered out to see two youths reversing their car to confront two men exiting the *Caspian* take-away. Still in the middle of the road and with his car engine still running, the driver proceeded to get out from his car and say something to the two "foreigners." The two men exchanged words between themselves in their native language. The youth seemed to repeat his question to them both and stood waiting for an answer. His manner

was obviously aggressive and I presumed he had insulted them in some way. The other youth in the passenger seat meanwhile sat laughing, enjoying the incident and the two men's silence. By this stage other cars in the street were being held up while this confrontation took place. Eventually, after a short stand-off, the youth got back into his car and drove off screeching his tyres. The two men talked and proceeded to get into their car and drive away.

Cardenden has hardly a non-white population to speak of; it is comprised solely of the Indian doctors who work in the local health centre and of one or two Pakistani families who own or manage four local shops. Despite this nominal presence locally, shop shutters in the main shopping area of the village are daubed with graffiti such as NF (National Front), and Blacks Out; and the local surgery has NF, BLACKS OUT and PAKI BASTARDS written on its main door. The local Church of Scotland had WANKERS scored into its wooden front doors and an advertisement for an American brand of rice being made to read "Uncle Ben is a Child Molester," while a lamp post on the main street read:

Nessie is a fucked up hore  
who has AIDS and  
recks of pish and fish  
and crabs and H.I.V. plus scabies.

Such incidences of textual violence were congruent with the linguistic violence used by teenage boys and girls in public. Thus I heard a young boy and his girlfriend being greeted by another teenage boy in the public park beside the busy children's play area with the shouted query: "Are ye shaggin her yet? Eh? Have ye hid a blow job yet?" On another occasion, sitting at four in the morning reading, I heard two locals smashing a bus shelter outside. I watched them as they methodically vandalised the glass panels. They seemed a little drunk so the kicks aimed at the glass panels required some concentration. A kick that failed to produce the required effect meant each had to take the time

to steady themselves in preparation for the next attempt. They were not teenagers but grown men. Once the job was done they did not run away but resumed walking home with no visible change in gait. On another occasion, at around one o'clock in the morning, I heard the drawn metal shutter of the *Caspian* takeaway being "bricked" by youths. The following day I saw the premise's neon sign had been smashed.

On 21 June 2001, I was again in my study. It was a warm day and I had a window open. I heard from the street below a girl shouting, "Are you a paedophile?" I looked out and saw five girls and two boys making their way to a local primary school sports day in the nearby park. I recognised one of the girls as she occasionally took my niece to play in the local play park. The object of the children's question was a young man standing at the bus stop waiting for a bus. He was approached by the pupils who congregated around him poking fun. I could see he was obviously uncomfortable by the attention as his head turned and he looked up the street every few seconds, as if desperate for the bus to arrive. The pupils proceeded to poke fun at his clothes. Recalling a previous conversation with a member of the local history group, who informed me that the local hotels were putting up paedophiles as part of an arrangement with Fife Council social work department, I speculated that this perhaps was the reason for the girl's question. I did not recognise the young man and it was likely he was not local. After a few minutes more teasing, an older man arrived to wait for the same bus and did his best to ignore what was happening within earshot. "Are you on drugs?" asked one of the girls of the "stranger." Eventually, the man suddenly left at which the group of pupils walked off to the park laughing amongst themselves with the air of having scored a victory of sorts.

Finally, I quote from an article in the *Fife Free Press* (October 12, 2001) titled 'Villagers Seek Action to Halt Hooligans' which had this to say regarding the deterioration of public space:

Cardenden residents say that they are living in fear after an upsurge in violence and vandalism on their streets. The village's active tenants and residents' association says that over the last six months groups of teenagers and young adults have been making lives a misery for others, particularly the elderly. And they claim it is only a matter of time before someone is killed in a drunken brawl.

Next there is an interview with a local resident who is quoted as follows:

I have lived in Cardenden all my 60 odd years and, in that time, things have never been so bad.

It would be easy to carry on this register of representation of Cardenden. To see and represent "simply" what is there, is to notice obvious signs of decline. Listening to the views of the older generation reveals a definite discourse of decline in the quality of community. At the afternoon local history group (18th May 1999) I recorded the following exchange:

Tam: Ye're feared tae gane doon Bowhill noo.

Jock: Once being auld wis yer guarantee e safety. Noo yer a target.

Annie: Would you walk through Lochgelly at night? Folk being put up in the Hotel. Some fae Alloa. Scum bags. Paedophiles. Dae ye ken there's seven paedophiles in Cardenden?<sup>19</sup> An they complain aboot the food. It's all DHSS folk in Piatas and in the Central.<sup>20</sup>

The conversation turns to local "troublemakers:"

Christopher Hamilton fae Carden Avenue. He's banned fae the (Corrie) centre. The Youth Club. He's always in trouble. His dad's got a new

---

<sup>19</sup> Something I noted early on from conversations with young mothers while attending the Corrie Centre's *Mothers & Toddlers* group was the ubiquity of arranged parties for children. I speculate whether this is more or less a direct result of new fears regarding children's safety whereby the traditional childhood spent out of doors largely unsupervised by adults is now something of the past for younger children.

<sup>20</sup> The names of local hotels.



girl friend, so Ah'm told. So watch that name, ye'll hear it again.

John: The young arsehole Chris Hamilton's mum she was at college. And on the till at Poundstretchers. Nae faither on the scene.

Hugh: Wee Hughie fae Bowhill he's away tae Kirkcaldy noo. We were well glad tae get rid e him.

Annie: There was a meeting against all these undesirables coming intae the village. There were only half a dozen folk at the Millennium meeting. We're gettin seven hanging baskets in the village to brighten the place up...There was a boy wi an ear ring the day asking for a meter to pay his electricity. He'd been cut off. Standin there in the office. They'll no remember comin hame tired. Or strugglin tae pay their rent.

Jim: Young folk the day'll no walk the length e theirsel.

What seems beyond question is that the older generation enjoyed a far richer experience of locality when compared to the younger '79 generation. In their view the centre of locality has not "held" between the two generations. The fear of being aggressed upon, when nothing fragile can survive public space, when shops must be fitted with metal shutters and drawn and padlocked each night, where just as there is no architectural centrepiece to the village as public space cannot sustain an "artistic" presence so that after dark public space is bereft of the elderly, what kind of subjectivity is able to survive such public space?

Connerton (1989) highlights the importance of communal bodily practices for "remembering." In the setting of Cardenden, and with respect to conditions of de-industrialisation, unemployment and under-employment, working class communities are vulnerable to "forgetting" due to this massive re-structuring and so find it difficult to transmit to the next (i.e. '79) generation their "values" and "culture" as these were never objectified in *discourse*, but were tied to mnemonic / physical practices, such as manual labour, so when particular relations of production (to say nothing of the *cultural* revolution since the nineteen-

fifties) become obsolete, there is a radical break between the generations because the "something" of working class "culture" is more a matter of pre-cognitive embodiment as opposed to an open 'discursivity.'

In representing Cardenden discursively a delicate balancing-act has to be continually maintained. While we must be clear about the "disintegrating" effects of the decline in the rich texture of village life which the '45 generation constantly allude to (*vide* chapter 4), we must also be clear that the various new "privatising" forces at work do *not* produce a general condition of *anomie*. Despite Rankin's representation there is very little *anomie* and the protestations at the little there is, is testimony to the *communitas* that is present and still expected. Rankin's representation of Cardenden itself is authorised because of his native status as the metropolitan émigré returning home. While this sense of alienation-yet-belonging is a theme of the first generation of working class authors (*vide* O'Hagan 1999) who have gone to university and have become sufficiently "empowered" to become estranged from their natal locality and class, such representations of "anomie," while I believe routinely exaggerated, do point to a new level of expectation among the '79 generation.<sup>21</sup>

Connected to the sense of a loss of locality due to de-industrialisation, my ethnography does not follow any 'natural cycle' or rhythm whether seasonal, liturgical or industrial or some other narrating frame. For many, such unifying narratives are gone and the only unit of narration that remains is the "working" week. Because locals are so socio-economically structured (*vide* chapter 2), the question of how "agency" can 'break through' structure does not apply as their structuration means precisely they are always "up-to-date" as they cannot afford the luxury of 'alienation' from the demands of structure, i.e. cannot afford to "purchase" a less than immediate relationship to time. The conception of working class structuration then that I will outline is not the

---

<sup>21</sup> Clearly, the "escape" from manual work among the first generation of the working class to go to university has had a direct impact upon the theoretical invisibility of working class culture.

structuralism Levi-Strauss (1958) articulated among the Amazonian tribes where structure acts to "imprison" its bearers into a perpetual "pre-history." In Cardenden, changing capitalist relations of production mediates process and history and, if anything, imprisons locals (and their ethnographic representation) into a radical synchrony.

All of the shifts of recent history that made Cardenden industrial, modern and capitalist (i.e. itself) in the experience of the older generation are gone, and there is literally a sense of 'nothing' to replace them<sup>22</sup>. The lesson from history is that a sense of place does not endure in a substantial form; that its existence is not its own because locals' attachment to locality is a creation of industrialisation so that de-industrialisation and the end of locality as the occupational community has the power to bring this attachment to an abrupt end.

Because of a vacuum in definitions of self and locality other than *homo economicus* and the demands of industry, this semantic space is new and is relevant to the politicisation of the '79 generation. Mary Douglas's call (1998) for new definitions of being "complete persons" may find in Cardenden a test case of the difficulties which arise from the limitations of modernity and industrialisation.

With such considerations of decline in mind, the idea of holding a *Fun Day* in the village was something of a challenge for the *Bonfire & Fireworks Display Committee*. I want to use this attempt at the production of community to ground some of the issues involved in trying to frame what is ethnographically significant at present by focussing on what I am calling the crisis in the reproduction of local identity, and how this identity is played out among the older and younger generations.

---

<sup>22</sup> In February 1987 the local Rex Hall (formerly a cinema) bingo venue closed down and was demolished and made into a car park; in July 1987 the local Auchterderran Junior secondary school closed; in 1997 the local Baptist church closed and was demolished November 2001; on 11 June 2000 St. Fothads church of Scotland closed and was demolished November 2001; in February 2001 Station Road petrol station closed; in February 2001 the Number 1 Goth pub closed. In addition there are numerous businesses closing.

## The Fun Day, 5th August 2000

On a Saturday morning I awoke to the sound of loud music from the *Fun Day* sound system in Wallsgreen Park blaring out the pop song *We're Going To Ibiza*. The purpose of the event was to raise money for the annual bonfire and fireworks display held every Halloween. Crucial to the day's success, apart from the weather, was the production of a sense of enjoyable community involvement, of *spectacle* and audience.

Walking around the stalls I was introduced to a local historian Dan Imrie. I noted his lapel badge which read: *Fife Miners' Community Culture Group*. Although I had wanted to speak with Dan for a number of years, this was the first time we had met. He was in good humour. I told him about my research to which he peremptorily asked, "*How come you haven't talked to me?*" His forthright query almost made me confident enough to reply the mines were old news. His assumption was clear: to study Cardenden is to study coal mining, and this required contacting him.

We began chatting and were soon joined by more older men. The topic of conversation was nicknames and how all the local "characters" were gone. Next, the men talked of how funerals are "watched." The next anecdote concerned how Dan "lost" three brothers. I lost interest half-way through how the second brother died as I was anxious not to get caught in the company of didactic old miners and moved off not to miss anything. I walked over to the arena to watch the local-American majorette group *The Suzettes*.<sup>23</sup> The master of ceremonies, with portable microphone in hand, informed the gathered audience the girls were "*ours*" as they were "*from the village*." I watched them perform in

---

<sup>23</sup> Not that such American influence is novel in Cardenden. Only after the miners' raws were cleared after world war two were streets given "real" names as opposed to simply being numbered *First Street*, *Second Street* etc. When asked why the streets had been numbered this way, locals advised this was an early American import. The story I was told was that a Mr. Muir was the manager of the Bowhill Coal Company colliery in 1895 and had returned from honeymoon in America and borrowed their system of naming streets. As Adam Ingram told me (25 May 1999): "Once we discovered there was a Sixth Street in New York we felt better."

their shiny blue uniforms. My initial enthusiasm died after a while and I was tempted to turn to someone to remark it was hard to know if they cared about their performance.

The next turn was one of the girls dancing solo to the pop song *What a Feeling*. The routine consisted of twirling, throwing and catching a baton in time with the music. The wind and uneven grass surface did not help. Looking at the gathered crowd watching I was struck by the thought that it was not that the dancers were poor but rather it was the audience that was poor; as if accustomed to dominant aesthetics of performance, they could not but feel disappointed with performances of such obvious lack of polish. It seemed the girl's attempt at art was doomed and added a pathetic quality to her performance which brought a tear to my eye; as if a moment of mimesis occurred seeing a young girl performing my own dilemma as ethnographer i.e. attempting art (or analysis) with an equally 'unpromising' audience or data set.

Walking around the stalls, men greeted each other with the query "*Were you out last night then?*", and young boys arrived on their bikes as if to decide whether the *Fun Day* was worth investigating. I overheard someone complaining there was no ice-cream van or "proper food" available. This was not due to bad planning but, as the point of *The Fun Day* was to raise funds, all the catering was being done by volunteers so that all proceeds could be kept local. Unfortunately, this had the result that the choice of food available was not up to expectations. I heard more complaints about there being no photographs taken of the winners of the 'Bonnie Baby Competition'; that there was no bouncy castles and, to top it off, the popular face painting stall had just run out of paint to the obvious disappointment of the children patiently queuing. It seemed everywhere there was the sound of expectations falling.

Walking among the stalls I thought I recognised a cousin's wife (Teresa) but at the same time noticed something amiss which I couldn't put my finger on. I wondered if it was her. I realised my doubts were because

none of her family were anywhere nearby; that it was the first time I had seen her without her family. I approached asking "*Where's the tribe then?*", at which I became aware she was with another woman. I said hello but was not introduced. This was strange behaviour, but because she ignored me, I followed suit, assuming she was a relative or friend.

I was not alone in wondering who the woman with Teresa was. It wasn't long before I learned Teresa worked for an organisation called *Home Start* which involves volunteers befriending a woman (normally) to help look after any children to give the mother a rest and some time to herself; or teaching a young mother how to look after her children. My two female informants mused between themselves whether such volunteers were paid.

By this stage *The Suzettes* had finished their programme. Next up was a local band called *Cheap Day Return*. When finally ready they began playing. However it soon became clear the sound system was unable to compete with the windy conditions as the sound cut in and out every few seconds. Half way through the first song, the MC announced due to the inadequate PA system the band would have to stop playing. As the band dismantled their gear, the MC took the opportunity to announce to the disappointed audience the band were available for bookings and functions. The audience about turned *en masse* and resumed wandering around the stalls. I was approached by one of the day's organisers (Wullie Duncan) who asked if I was interested in taking part in a tug-of-war competition. Reluctantly I agreed, not wanting to appear lacking in community spirit; at which he handed me a pen and sheet of paper and asked me to get a team together. I declined the task without explaining, not wanting to spend my day press-ganging volunteers.

By this stage it was clear there was little else to see or for the children to do. Shortly afterwards my wife Eva invited the rest of my family home for coffee. The rain had started and we left as the MC was calling for a



second team for the tug-of-war. Only one team had been mustered so far. Leaving the park I noticed Dan and the group of stertorous old miners on the same spot where I had left them; they were still going strong.

Once indoors Eva suggested we should have gone to *The Goth* for a coffee. Everyone agreed but none of the "natives" thought of going out for coffee; as if still to learn the *Goth* was now a bistro and not just a pub. At three o'clock I looked out from my upstairs bedroom window. All that was left of the *Fun Day* were seagulls circling for scraps of food. At three thirty the first sunshine of the day arrived for fifteen minutes until the next blanket of cloud arrived.

### **The Local Structure of Time**

Whatever about Marcus's characterisation of the ethnographer struggling to invest meaning in "thin cultural forms," the first evaluative comment on the day (from Eva) reflected no such analytical qualms as she announced while waiting for the coffee: "*That was rubbish, so boring!*" It seems she spoke everyone's thoughts and such a comment was only a matter of time. However, everything about the day had held my interest. Initially, however, when walking to meet up with the rest of my family, I had been hopeful that the day would give me an idea, a good quote or perhaps a new informant. I knew such set-piece events when locals came together were rare. However, when walking to join my family in the park it suddenly occurred to me, over two years into fieldwork "*I'm here for a language of decline.*" From that moment it seemed the whole day constituted itself correctly; that the meaning of the *Fun Day* came into focus. The idea of a 'language of decline' was an insight into historical process; a matter of putting the day in historical context, in relationship to other *different* and successful days.

Looked at in themselves each stall is "what it is;" but viewed historically it was as if each stall or failed performance became another "word" in a language of decline; as if each stall was a poor copy or "fake"

reproduction of a better and more “real” idea and practice of yesterday. Necessary to the triggering of this thought was the conspicuous display of various attempts at communal participation; whether forming a team for tug-of-war, a local mother successfully entering her child for the bonnie baby competition despite initially remarking “Ah widnae degrade ma bairn like that!”, or playing the role of an audience member, each is a matter of constructed practice that is learned; and what can be learned can be forgotten.

When viewed in this relational way each revealed historical process culminating in the clear conclusion that constituting the present was the fact that it was a *failure* in many locals’ eyes, or even an embarrassment to the extent that people were privately glad when rain provided an excuse to leave. Only seeing failed attempts at “sociality” did I find my sight; only a relational view (made possible by the introduction of comparison with prior times / gala days) produced a coherent sentence that brought decline into focus. The locals were actually performing decline for the first time since I entered the field and what was an inadvertent moment of collective and public honest failure, for me was a cathartic moment of insight. Finally seeing decline being performed before my eyes, I saw something real.

Only having this insight brought it home to me that previous to this I had felt baffled by what seemed like two years spent attempting an unthinkable Kantian intuition of being-qua-being. When looking at Cardenden I had felt it was ‘unthinkable’ because its constitutional history was invisible to the naked eye, so that I had remained in what Gadamer has called “the agony of seeing” (1975: 536). The experience was like a *visual* reproduction of Willis’s struggle to elicit meaning from the thin discourses of the working class lives he had studied.

After many interviews and instances of indifference to community this day promised a reversal of this normality, yet only succeeded in

highlighting, as opposed to contesting, normality ever more clearly. Only in the set piece *attempt* at *communitas* did failure become 'seeable'; literally make a spectacle of itself. And because 'significance' or *communitas* can least be faked or staged at this local level, among neighbours and friends and fellow "kent faces," there is no effort at affectation or pretence, so my appraisal of the *Fun Day* does not accord with that recorded by Turner in his study of *The Gala Day* in Cockenzie and Port Seaton in 1978.<sup>24</sup> "Seeing" decline then is a structural-cultural construct as *communitas* can not be turned on and off at will; can not be invented just for a day. Being a re-branding of the traditional aestival attempts at *communitas* such as the *Gala Day* or *Club Treat*, the *Fun Day* served to embarrass and therefore proved to be significant as it revealed the present condition as history / ethnography.

In February 2001 there was a meeting to discuss ways to improve on the disappointment of August 5th, 2000. The result of this meeting was that a *Village Fair* would be organised for August 2001. In the 'Bowhill Centre Annual Report 2001' the *Fun Day* was summed up in the following schizophrenic fashion:

Once again this was a successful event run in August 2000 by the Bonfire & Fireworks Display Committee. Due to lack of volunteers and helpers this will be the last Funday organised by the Committee.

The problem of reproducing community is not confined to Cardenden. The *Glenrothes Gazette* (Thursday, May 27th 1999) reported the failure of North Glenrothes Gala, only "resurrected" in 1998, under the headline *Apathy Kills Gala in North Glenrothes*. The article quotes from the Gala committee secretary Fiona Beveridge:

The public just don't seem to be interested in helping at a gala in North Glenrothes. They may

---

<sup>24</sup> Robert Turner 'Gala Day as an Expression of Community Identity' in A. Jackson (ed.) *Way of Life and Identity*, North Sea Oil Panel Occasional Paper No. 4, [n.d.]

have turned up on the day, as they did last year, but it requires a lot more commitment than that.

Reflecting on the group of old miners, the older generation are able to resist the fact of the village returning again to 'nothing' whereas the younger generation do not have such memories to resist the debilitating effects of de-industrialisation. Indeed, because of their up-to-date structuration, they do not even register this prior experience of history / time. In chapter four I will develop the thesis that this has clear implications for the reproduction of British identity across the generations.

While it is a matter of fact that the original *raison d'etre* of locality has passed, raising questions as to the production of the meaning of place, which generation could take responsibility for seeing and naming this deindustrial decline if each generation is each in their own way the subject of a generation-specific structuration? It seems 'seeing' the perspective of historic decline is unlikely as what is required is an institution that can generate a history of 'seeing' across the generations and assume the responsibility of representing and registering this social change.

### **Family Life**

An institution which registers social change through the generations *par excellence* is the family. Having said in the introduction there is a structural integralism that seems to characterise working class communities, a corollary of this is that there is also an "integral decline" that ruthlessly extends the crisis of the reproduction of locality to family life. Interviewing people on the doorsteps of their homes it became clear to me that among the '45 generation there is the perception of disorienting changes in fundamental issues of belonging, social role, kinship structure etc. which have occurred in their lifetime. Interviewing Rose Anderson (9 Carden Crescent) in June 1999, she reported her

profound sense of foreboding for the future. When pressed to explain what she meant by this, she told me that young people seemed no longer capable of forming family life:

As Ah said, things are definitely changin.  
People jist dinnae, ye ken...When Ah look aboot  
me Ah think we need a change ...Ken look at the  
trouble that's gaun oan, ye didnae get that  
before!

*What trouble dae ye mean?*

Everythin! Ken it sounds silly, wee  
things...Bit families! Ah dinnae  
ken...somethin's went wrong some  
place...something's happenin tae oor  
country...an Ah don't know what.

In a similar frame of mind was Wilma Beattie (4 Orebank Road) when I interviewed her on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November 1999:

Imagine gettin tae ma age an everythin's worse!  
Ken, everywhere ye look aboot ye...At ma age,  
every value, everythin Ah ever thought aboot  
the way tae go aboot things, every idea Ah ever  
hud, every value that Ah ever had, every way e  
daen things, everythin Ah've got in ma heid,  
jist turn that aboot, totally roonabout,  
totally completely reverse everythin Ah've ever  
believed in an Ah might be jist get it right  
fir 1999.

Rose's concerns about "family life" were also raised by my wife Eva. Having been married for only a few weeks, while painting doors preparing to move into our council flat she suddenly asked: "*When are we getting divorced?*" Asking why she had asked such a question, she replied it seemed as if everyone who lived in our building, everyone we talked to or to whom I introduced her to was either divorced or separated. After a quick mental listing, it was clear that households consisting of divorced or separated or unmarried single mothers and their children formed half of the households in the flats.

The problem of absentee fathers emerged as a prominent theme during fieldwork. On December 11th (1999) a young man came to the door to ask if he could borrow a key so he could obtain access to a storage area in the basement of the building. When returning the key a few minutes later, I enquired if he was moving into one of the flats. He informed me he was only renting on a temporary basis from a friend at number 55 because his wife had "jist kicked me oot."

After we terminated our tenancy in Cardenden Road the next tenant was another unmarried single mother who never had, nor foresaw herself, ever constituting a family unit with the father of her child. The growing need to distinguish *pater* and *genitor* is indicative of sexual behaviour reaching its "escape velocity" from traditional cultural norms among the '79 generation in particular. From Wilma's comments quoted above it seems as if in this generation "everything" has reached its escape velocity from now defunct social regulation so that "everything" requires the miracle of stand-alone substantive commitment to survive.

Despite the '45 generation looking on in apprehensive fear, the fact is each generation share the same obedience to their respective hegemonic social and ideological structuration. In Althusser's vocabulary, each generation is as 'interpolated' as the other. Given this predicament, it is not surprising that among the ever 'traditionless' working class '79 generation, the heirs of the fifties and sixties "cultural revolution", when "freedom" itself is freed from all forms of traditional 'mystification', this working class generation instantiate a sharp rise in what is termed "casual" or "recreational" sex, drug use, linguistic and physical violence etc.

Because of the disintegration of the cultural "superstructure" and an absence of shared objective "rules," young men and women have learned it is an option to become fathers or mothers but that this does not include assuming a new identity (especially for the father) or the responsibility of constituting a household or family unit; as if paternity or



maternity is something no longer subject to normative rules and regulations regulating sexual reproduction so that the "decision" to make a commitment to paternity or maternity, for example, is increasingly reduced to a private personal choice.

The '79 generation are both impoverished and liberated by the increasing absence of socially sanctioned structures of commitment. Paternity in particular becomes another site of the "disintegration" of society, of the loss of shared defining and 'objective' social structures to be internalised, so that the poorer elements of the working class are often exempted from the expectation and ability to reproduce the traditional family unit. There is a certain cultural logic on view then when the first controversial legislation passed by the Scottish parliament was with a view to removing the stigma of illegitimacy.

There is a crisis then in the reproduction of family life because the least structurally capable are asked most to exercise a substantivist miracle of commitment to the "value" of fatherhood with predictable results; fatherhood, being a structural phenomenon, as soon as it is required to become a 'stand-alone' substantive value, declines among the most disadvantaged. When reproducing family life becomes exposed to the full brunt of financial considerations via the family realm becoming something else that is "privatised," being without a father becomes the latest index of a cultural and material poverty.

## Id, Identity & Ideology: Work & The Integral Self

We call him Blister. He only shows up wance aa  
the work's done.

Tim Colville

*ESW Operative*

As an ethnographic point of reference in investigating the fundamental role of work in working class structuration, I quote at length from an interview with George Curran (November 1999, 41 Orebank Road), a thirty-five year old local who happened to begin talking of his work when being interviewed about his views on the Scottish parliament:

Everythin revolves aroond money eh. If you've  
no got a wage e money comin in, Ah mean life's  
shit ken. Ken, what can ye dae wi nae money?  
Nooadays eh? Somethin tae live oan eh. Ah mean  
Ah've got a joab there the noo bit it's fuckin  
crap eh.

*Where are ye workin about?*

Bukos. Supermarket trolleys an that eh. Ah mean  
Ah've been there, Ah wis there an Ah left, this  
is ma third time back. Ah've been back comin up  
fir two year noo or something. Bit Ah mean the  
money's crap. Bit it's only five minutes o'er

the road eh. An wi her [his wife Kirsty] getting her wee joab an aa we get by ken, bit the fuckin money's shite an aa. Ah mean Ah work day-shift back-shift, two shifts like, an Ah'm only comin in wi a hunder an seventy pound a week<sup>1</sup>, crap ye ken. Bit there nothin better. Ah mean that's shift allowance an everythin ken.

*Ah used tae work back shift at Kettle Produce. Packin veg.*

Oh Ah wis up there an aa. Ah wis the same a couple e Christmas' ago. In fact Kirsty wis wi us wane year. The bairn wis only aboot two or somethin an ma faither said Ah'll watch it. Ah'll watch the bairn. Couple e shifts o'er Christmas on the night shift, makin up like wee soup packs. Cannae mind what we were gettin. Twenty quid a shift or something the night shift bit cunt ye've got tae dae it eh when yer skint. Ye've got tae dae it eh...Aye Ah've been up there a couple e times eh, jist sort e on the side an that eh, workin away bit. Plus Ah never want tae go back tae cause it's aye, likes e the winter months when everythin's happenin ye ken. It's fuckin freezin ken. Runnin aboot wi a daft peenie an a daft hat an everythin. A wee net fuckin hing.

*An Ah see the tattie place in Cluny is shut.*

In fact Ah went along, Ah wis struggling aboot three year ago an aa; Ah went along fir a joab and what wis it fir, Ah wis back shift that first week Ah started. Ah done the Monday and the Tuesday and Wednesday Ah come fuckin hame. Went tae the portacabin, went fir a pish an the boy wis watchin the Liverpool game. An Ah said Ah'm no workin in here. It worked oot aboot twenty one pound a night or somethin. Ken it wis say four o'clock till twelve or five o'clock till one in the mornin it wis. Bit it worked oot aboot a hunder an twa pound a week or somethin an Ah thought fuck...Ah wis desperate wi Christmas comin eh, wi the bairns, an Monday it wis shite, Tuesday it wis shite and Wednesday as Ah say it wis aboot piece time Ah seen the cunts; fitba wis comin oan eh. Cunts were lappin it up. Ah says Ah'm gaun hame tae watch the fitba. He says Ah'll see ye the morn.

---

<sup>1</sup> As of March 2000 the average weekly wage in Britain was £426. With the government definition of poverty as "less than half average earnings" George is classed as living in poverty. In August 2001, one 30 year-old informant showed me his letter of notification that he was entitled to Jobseeker's Allowance which he had applied for. He was to receive £53.05 a week i.e. had to live on £7.58 per day. This could buy him four pints of lager at £1.75 from the *Railway Tavern*.

Ah says no ye'll fuckin no, Ah'm no comin back ken.

*It's jist what ye can get. Last Christmas I worked six twelve hour shifts at the post office a week for two hunder an fifty.*

Terrible eh. Bit everybody's the same noo. Ah mean even wi the minimum rate an that. Bit folk ken there a minimum rate there so ya cunt they dinnae go much higher than it anyway. Ah wis oan four sixty-three an oor there Ah think. Ah dinnae make bonus or that at ma work eh. When Ah wis workin on the line operatin, Ah mean Ah wis getting o'er thirty five pound a week bonus. Ah went hame wi two hunder an five, two hunder an six pound jist fir ma thirty nine oors which wisnae bad. Bit Ah've got an easier joab noo, Ah jist drive a forklift an that an dinnae make nae bonus. Ken, bit four sixty three an hour an they're that tight these bastards we fought fae twenty second May right up tae four or five weeks fir pay rises. We asked fir one an a half percent. Knocked us back. We fought an fought. Union says they've nae money. We'll gie ye a hunder pound at Christmas less tax, aboot seeventy quid. We said fuck off ken so we voted. A hunder an fifty odds said beat it, aboot thirty cunts said we'll take it. So it got scrapped. So in the end we ended up got two and a quarter per cent which is fuck all, aboot nine pence an oor, backdated an that ken. Fucked us aboot fir eight month fir nine pence.

*What's the Union at Bukos?*

Transport and General. Fuckin Pete Young an his fuckin merry men. Used tae stay up the prefabs. Bald heided cunt. He's like the Fife rep. Diddy man. Half e Cardenden's there. There's loads an loads e folk.

*How many's employed there?*

Full time there's usually aboot two hunder an fifty or three hunder ken, bit like the noo Christmas that's the rush Ah think there wis four hunder an forty or something. They jist payed them aa aff there.

*So they take on folk especially for the Christmas?*

Aye. Ah'm usually aboot July August time right up tae Christmas ken. Usually get aboot six month eh. Some folk are jist there six weeks an

get paid aff again. Christmas. That's aa the orders. Shite eh. Bit it's a joab eh? <sup>2</sup>

Nowhere does George attempt to address himself to the "nature" or meaning of his work "in itself." Rather he is continually relating his work to a world of non-work and meaning such as self, family and home and the constantly present, and never able to become a matter of unconscious structure, need to keep reproducing week-to-week existence. Similarly, there is no evidence of a "work ethic" as a value in itself because in a cash economy work is *necessary* and no ideological articulation of the necessity of work is required; or if there is such a work ethic, it is a necessary representation of structural relations (*vide* Thompson 1967).

A similar highlighting of the "naturelessness" of work is Constable's (1997) ethnography of Filippina domestic workers in Hong Kong. Constable's informants are clear that it is kinship i.e. culturally defined obligations, which often determine their economic activity as foreign domestic workers, as opposed to some reified conception of rationality or prudence; that it is culture that decides what is rational and or prudent economic behaviour. Often it is the unskilled or semi-skilled worker who reveals the antithesis of a work-ethic i.e. a purely instrumental view of work; work whose use-value is reduced most markedly to its cash value as a means of fulfilling non-economic functions. During fieldwork it was only tradesmen whose work I heard occasionally being talked of as approaching a substantive something "in itself". Only in these rare occasions was work able to be made a matter of discourse via semi-professionalisation and the power to control working practices that this implies, as they talked of technical aspects of particular jobs among themselves.

From listening to workers I would argue they clearly erect a discourse of identification with their embodied "hands-on" selves and erect a discourse of authenticity upon this identification. Many informants

---

<sup>2</sup> As reported in *The Fife Free Press*, Jan. 4, 2002, *Buko Ltd*, a Glenrothes-based supermarket trolley

consciously say they prefer manual work because they prefer "being themselves" i.e. they identify a semantic dislocation occurring in the white-collar world of work and meaning; as if their participation in this would require them to do semantic violence to their cultural intentionality by requiring them to find it *meaningful*. They refuse the burden of pursuing a "career" as if this would mean the concession of too much "self," as opposed to the less compromising investment of self required by manual work. Because their work is full of non-work, far less "economic" related meaning i.e. it supports them and their families and pays for their preferred or even anti-economic selves, there is the attempt to preserve a semantic purity / identity and a resistance to 'corruption' by management attempts at making work substantively meaningful.

### **The Meeting**

To illustrate the disdain workers often show towards attempts at investing work with a meaning that it does not have for them, I recall a meeting I attended (Monday, 16 August 1999) when working with *East of Scotland Water* at Pathhead waste water treatment plant in Kirkcaldy. The purpose of the meeting was for the new Waste Water Treatment manager (Peter Farrer) to get to know "his men" and communicate certain imminent changes in working practices. At the meeting he was accompanied by his personal assistant who at the beginning of the meeting produced a plate of cakes and biscuits. While the pre-meeting banter was polite and friendly, nobody took a cake or biscuit, despite a deliberate show of several offers. In my naivety I was the only one to take a biscuit thinking, I am embarrassed to admit, I was somehow "leading by example."

During the meeting buzzwords included "empowerment" and the proposed implementation of new working practices and "self-management teams" within the waste water treatment squads. The aim of these changes was to have the men themselves take responsibility for

---

manufacturer, employing 280 staff, went into receivership December 2001.



handling their own absenteeism and "skilling up" on the job. In the course of his opening discourse, the new manager made a point of emphasising the fact that, in contrast to previous company culture, he wanted to know "what makes you tick". He then began "sharing" something of himself and proceeded to list the various engineering and management projects he had been involved in prior to his current position within *East of Scotland Water*; that he was a rugby player, attended a public school, attended university etc.

After his speech each of the men sitting around the table in the bothy were "invited" to take it in turn to say something about themselves. Each contribution was brief and to the point. Each stated they were married, how many children they had, how long they had been employed with *East of Scotland Water*, what football team they supported and finished. After the meeting the men remained in the bothy to have their piece while the manager headed off downstairs to say his goodbyes to our supervisor before leaving, with PA and uneaten cakes and chocolate biscuits, for his next scheduled meeting with more of "his men" in Cupar plant before heading back to his office at Pentland Gate in Edinburgh.

Among the men there was an immediate and palpable sense of release from the surreal nature of the meeting; as if the highly polished performance of middle class being had induced the need to assert a normally unsaid working class subjectivity; as if the performance of bourgeois / management identity had constructed within the men an "essential" proletarian identity. An explosion of derision was only a matter of time. One comment from Mick Kelman<sup>3</sup> struck the tone of the verbal ejaculations that followed:

---

<sup>3</sup> Mick was a superb informant. When asked what he thought of the plans to merge the three Scottish water authorities he replied: "We'll soon be runnin roond in vans wi *Last E Scotland Water* an eventually fuckin Thames Water as the new logo". This was an oblique reference to the workings of the Competition Act which Mick, along with most ESW workers, believe will mean the water industry in Scotland will soon be taken over by any one of a number of larger and fully privatised English water companies. Not yet fifty, Mick took early retirement in October 2001 because of what he viewed as unacceptable changes in working practices. He now works four days a week for the American supermarket chain *Safeway* delivering leaflets to households in Glenrothes and east Fife.

What the fuckin hell wis that? Wi her fuckin see if ye can see ma fanny<sup>4</sup> skirt on. Coming in and shoving cakes on the table expectin somethin. What the fuck is that aa about? Some fuckin tart wi a skirt half way up her arse. Treating us like fuckin baubles. Fuckin prick. "Ah've got a fuckin career!" Ya cunt!

From scenes such as these I find workers in many ways are more ruthlessly pragmatic than any manager in that they are sceptical of any attempt at mythologising or mystifying the significance, or indeed the insignificance, of work whether *vis-a-vis* the propaganda of the need for an entrepreneurial / proactive attitude to work, or the myths of alienation within the Marxist tradition. Informants have no substantivist illusions about the meaning of their work. If they do not talk about work because they find it "meaningless", they do not mythologise, far less romanticise this meaninglessness, because they are clear it is the one thing necessary to reproduce their social survival and therefore has obvious importance. They are not saddened by the notion that the work they do is 'meaningless' or is boring because the meaning it does have for them often has little to do with the work itself.

Because the paradigmatic relation in the experience of workers is the wage-capital relation, it is work that incarnates the fundamental principle *the real is relational*. The daily obedience to and performance of this social fact is the safeguard against temptations to a substantivist approach to the working class or to a non-labour approach either by locals themselves or their ethnographer. The first principle of any ethnography of the working class then must concern work as a necessary genuflexion, in the order of representation, to the fundamental obedience to social reality workers themselves perform every day.

In contrast to Chatterjee's conception (1993) of the sourcing of Indian nationalism within the realm of human 'interiority', whereby the "Indian

---

<sup>4</sup> Slang for vagina.

self" is the one *hinterland* the colonising British were unable to penetrate and so was able to provide the cultural resources the nationalist could mobilise as an uncontaminated source of "Indianness," in my account of working class subjectivity as a source of a type of nationalism, in no way do I mean to imply the existence of a subject or subjectivity somehow free from capitalist history / penetration. The subjectivity or "Scottishness" untouched by capitalist relations has no place in an ethnography of Cardenden or a theoretical conceptualisation of the working class. Because people are thoroughly penetrated by capitalist relations and the cash economy, there is no pure Scottish subjectivity locked away somewhere out of reach of history which nationalism can draw upon, and which the ethnographer can construct to arrive at a "native point of view" or a real Scottish self. This is clearly antithetical to a structuralist view of working class identity.

## **2.1 Writing About Working**

The task of rendering the embodied self textually, translating a being-in-the-world into a discursive representation in writing, a something that remains unarticulated as an object *in itself* and is expressed only indirectly in daily concrete relations among workers and the wider social relations they participate in, is very difficult to achieve. Hence, while I think Willis (1977) correctly frames manual labour as a crucial category of working class "culture", I believe in the end Willis is guilty of a certain moralising that can write of the "intrinsic meaninglessness" of manual labour and can only thereby fail to establish it as a category in its own right. This position is similar to Bourdieu's concept of "subjectless practice" (1977: 35) which I read as verbal slippage evidencing thoughtlessness vis-à-vis ordinary practices such as manual work; a thoughtlessness which inadvertantly speaks of a deep enthrallment to semantic and intentionalist definitions of personhood that have great

difficulty in “thinking” the body.<sup>5</sup> I will argue that because the body can achieve its own autonomous being-in-the-world the ethnographer of the working class must similarly reproduce this ontological fact in the order of theoretical representation in his or her analytical framework; that if we fail to categorically render “subjectless practice” we will end up having to posit and explain the existence of an “authorless” and “anonymous” Scottish nationalism.

In addition I want to unpack some of the implications of Donna Haraway's thesis that “[n]either our personal bodies nor our social bodies may be seen as natural, in the sense of existing outside the self-creating process called human labour” (1991: 10), and explore the semantics of the labour experience itself. I argue that the work experience is the *ens realissimum* of working class experience and that other structurations stand in relation to this (*vide* Offe 1985). To give an ethnographic illustration of the relationship which I suggest here between labour, embodiment, and its implications for writing, I recall the following incident that occurred while working on Monday, 19 June 2000.

At the wastewater treatment plant in East Wemyss (Fife) I began hosing down a fine screen with a high pressure hose. Every week a layer of scum gathers on the wire meshing and had to be regularly cleaned. The water passed through a generator to produce the required pressure to clean the large rotating drum which screens out rags, human excrement, condoms, sanitary towels, industrial wastes etc. from the main inlet channel. The hose carrying the water under pressure was attached to a 'gun' with a trigger that sprays the water I aimed at the steel mesh. The hose constantly vibrated under the pressure of the water being forced through, and two strong hands and a continual application of upper body strength was needed to keep the gun piece under control.

---

<sup>5</sup> For an example of the artistic representation of the anonymity and literal absence of the ‘human face’ in depictions of work and workers, I refer the reader to Robert Crozier’s *Men in the Pub* (1971) reproduced in Alan Bold’s *Aesthetics in Scotland by Hugh Macdiarmid* (1984).

Because of the level of noise and the obvious reluctance of anyone to approach someone hosing down a fine screen, as they would be splashed with human and industrial waste products, the job was done alone and having done the job many times previously, I was not expecting to be interrupted. Because the only real effort required was physical, I often used the job to mentally switch off, simply letting the rotating drum pass under the action of the water I was aiming. Each week the task took approximately thirty minutes of continual hosing to complete. While I was busy doing this job, my supervisor busied himself checking instrumentation, pumps, water levels and plant machinery. With the plant checked and maintained, we returned to the van to head off to the next plant. I used the driving time between plants as an opportunity to jot down some fieldnotes on manual labour.

Shaping my hand to write it began to vibrate uncontrollably. I straightened my arm and fingers for a few seconds and the shaking stopped. I tried writing again with the same result: as soon as my hand took the pen in hand and shaped to begin writing, it vibrated uncontrollably. I realised the writing position was imitating the working position required to hose down the screen and because the memory of this action was still fresh in my hand, the hand began to shake uncontrollably. The act of writing or representation brought forth the reality of embodied memory of the "worked self." Had I simply kept working or proceeded to something other than writing or representing, the autonomous existence of a "worked self" would not have evidenced itself.

This simple experience evidences the idea that the bodily effects of work reach into the subject independently of his or her consciousness. The body is an autonomous structure and source of structuration; has its own autonomous being-in-the-world and autonomous adaptation to the life of manual work which always achieves itself; sweat does not require "permission" from the consciousness of the worker before it is produced because the body is a "subject" in its own right.



We can extend this “embodied memory” in a temporal direction to include not only the few minutes after working with a high-pressure hose but a day, a week or even a lifetime of work to enquire regarding the implications of the “worked self” for these larger periodisations and ask how can the ethnographer grasp the consequences for representation of the bodily habitus formed over the course of a lifetime.

## **2.2 The Worked Self: Reducio Ad Sensum & Ad Humanum**

While “In physiological terms each [worker] is expending energy and is therefore altered by the work effort” (Wallman 1979: 4) so that “the observer’s body may serve as a diagnostic tool” (Blacking 1977: 6), and just as in cooking, when applying heat to a foodstuff it is said to be “reduced”, so via work, conceived as expending energy and therefore creating heat, the body too is “reduced” via work and we have the metaphor of salt, produced via working / sweating (as in the phrase “the salt of the earth”), connected to ideas of “reality” or “genuineness.” I conceive of the worked self in terms of a *psycho-physical reduction* effected by the expenditure of energy in labouring. From reflection upon my own labour experience with other workers, and from listening to and being with other workers, I use the generic term “reduction” as a way of conceptualising how the labouring body incarnates a fundamental orientation to the world.

I abstract a further specification of this *relatedness* by conceiving two modalities or tendencies within this reduction: the *ad sensum* tendency based upon the daily production of an existence (or *esse* i.e. act of existence) marked by an existential privileging of the corporeal and the prioritisation of satisfactions of the body i.e. a tendency towards sensation, and secondly, an *ad humanum* tendency towards “humane” or solidarity behaviours and sentiments among themselves that reflects finding in work the founding necessity and rationale for cultivating such behaviours. Within the integral working class self I propose a dialectic



between the carapaced *ad sensum* behaviours, the "complex of toughness" Mary Searle-Chatterjee has identified among Benares sweepers (in Wallman 1979: 285), and the more humane *ad humanum* characteristics on view.

I use the *ad humanum* term to specify a quality of relatedness to other people in similar coping and "vulnerable" conditions and the term *ad sensum* to capture a tendency to an obviously visceral quality in the behaviour of workers and the working class generally and its reproduction in other areas of behaviour.

While the *ad humanum* behaviours of solidarity and community are behaviours which ethnographers such as Scheper-Hughes (1992) highlight as a sign of a better or more humane society, these behaviours emerge from the necessity of accommodating the "negative" *ad sensum* behaviours. While it is understandable that writers are often tempted to totalise what they conceive as the "humanity" contained within the *ad humanum* behaviours into an integral humanism and vision of society, this interpretation fails to realise these behaviours borrow their substantiality in great part from an *ad sensum* context so that outwith the necessity of enduring hard and difficult conditions the solidaristic behaviours would disappear from view. When the compulsion of necessity is removed, so are the compulsions for humane behaviours (*vide* Fantasia 1988 & 1995). As Willis put it in his ethnography of the English working class: "The couplet accommodation / resistance is riveted tight" (1977: 185).

Scheper-Hughes (1992: 184-195) describes the barrio residents of *Bom Jesus* in Brazil as living "*embodied lives*" in the sense of having a "*somatic culture*" which is dominated by living in the moment. This made it all the more critical, existentially, that her informants were lacking the psychological or cultural capital to establish a credible relationship or orientation (not least in their own estimation) between themselves and the future or past. An ethnography of working class

subjectivity must recognise this instantiation of what might be termed a modernist "end-of-tradition" narrative like no other class, and their sincere and real alienation from any pretence whatever to tradition or resistance; their commonsensical practicality that is routinely contemptuous at any attempt at "meaning;" where such alienation becomes a mark of their "authenticity." When individuals begin their working lives they are clearly initiated into adult society. Rather than mythologizing this introduction to the relations of production as a *rit de passage* into the exigencies for social change, far less revolution, it is far more an induction into a new personal and social role as reproducer of the social *status quo*. These defining social facts are akin to an ontological tattoo sealing membership in such a community of fate; where sharing this fatalism, a direct psychic result of which is a characteristic lack of representational effort, must be seen as an essential element of belonging to working class culture.

The "reduced" condition achieves itself within the subject regardless of the worker's consciousness. Importantly, given the traditional homogeneity of working class culture – a feature of the occupational community - this transformation is not culturally marked or perhaps even personally felt as a caesura with a sharp sense of before and after within the subject. Normatively of course, the experience of and the quality of *finality* that accompanies the becoming of the *reducio* is crucially conditioned by the expectation that it is permanent. This produces a certain fatalism; a sort of attitudinal "pound of flesh" that must be paid to the prospect of a life of manual work as it is not an idle or playful becoming but one that inaugurates the rest of one's working life and ontological history.

Once the appropriate physical and attitudinal accommodations are made the work experience is free to reproduce itself in other areas outside of work. For production line workers then, for example, the effect of work seeks to reproduce its frenetic immediacy in non-work activities. The worker plays hard because he has worked hard; because he seeks the

mimesis of recognition of himself in all things; to feel himself in play as his work has constituted this dominant feeling and experiencing of self. His work teaches him the gold standard of feeling and reality, and whatever does not conform to this standard is felt to be unreal, unsatisfactory or even fake. To anticipate, this will have implications for credible constructions of the nation, national identity and its politicisation.

In contrast to Willis's own interpretation of the labour experience I disagree that in the work experience there is " an experiential separation of the inner self from work [where] Labour power is a kind of barrier to, not an inner connection with, the demands of the world" (1977: 101). What informants say about their work and what work effects upon informants must be separated. Whereas Willis takes informants' expressions of contempt for work as implying a separation or division between their real self from the self "loaned out" to the work-capital relation, this does not authorise the conclusion there is no positive ontological transformation of the self in labour. I argue not only that a "real self" is produced via labour but that there occurs here at the "point of production" a deep integration of self and "world."

While Willis argues "In the end it is recognised that it is specifically the cultural diversion that makes any job bearable" (1977: 102), this does not mean that the human body, unlike the mind and its explicit consciousness, is somehow capable of instantiating a dualism in order to negate the effects of labour. Willis writes that:

The conformists in the Hammertown school are much more likely to believe in the possibility of satisfaction in work, to construct their futures through the categories supplied in work, and to see their own values and achievements expressed through the intrinsic properties of work activity...Labouring for them

expresses its own properties, not other indirect cultural values.

(1977: 104).

The kind of work that possesses "intrinsic properties" in Willis's estimation is not manual labour. It is because Willis fails to conceptualise the body adequately that he fails to give manual labour "its own properties" and reproduces the distinction between "meaningful" semantic work and "meaningless" physical work due to an unconscious theory of meaning that privileges semanticism as a Cartesian phenomenon at the expense of the physicality of the worked body (*vide* Scheper-Hughes & Lock 1987).

While production-line workers clearly appeal to "other indirect cultural values" to make their work more meaningful, the ethnographer is not thereby authorised to conclude such work as work is ethnographically meaningless. In such work there is something made real and constituted by the *relations* entered into; an embodied self is made "live" or really present in the wage-capital relation of selling labour, so that a prolonged period outwith these relations means this self is felt as unreal.

The difficulty of grasping this self is due to the fact that this self's "self-presence" is not given *a priori* but is rather a series of moments, of experiences of itself being differently related to the world at different moments; its self-presence is distributed among different circumstances and because of this radically non-substantialist self it is easy, even natural, for a particular individual or ethnographer to search within for this reduced "worked self" only to see nothing and conclude naturalistically that there is no such self to find. With this difficulty in mind Bourdieu has written:

Habitus reveals itself - remember that it consists of a system of dispositions, that is, of virtualities, potentialities, eventualities - only in reference to a definite situation. It is only *in the relation* to certain structures

that habitus produces given discourses or practices...We must think of it as a sort of spring that needs a trigger.

(in Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 135).

This problematic is compounded when the ethnographer does not share in this daily life of manual work so that the ethnographic attempt at pinpointing a "point of production" and a "worked self" can resemble snark hunting. As Hill Gates has written of her own efforts at ethnography of Chinese womens' labour:

Because the two Chinese genders mutually constitute each other, it is impossible to talk about women without implicating men - just as the reverse is always true. Here, however, I will focus on women as best I can, for women's worker identities are especially interesting, always on the brink of dissolving into those of kinship.

(in Perry 1996: 128).

Just as we must not make the mistake of dissolving the meaning of work into other indirect cultural values, so we should not fail to posit a real "worked self" or worker identity simply because such an identity is often felt to be "dissolving into" other identities that clearly are present. While a relational view of meaning implies a "*break with the tendency to think of the social world in a substantialist manner*" (1998: 31), the habitus of the embodied self is itself a substantive something notwithstanding the *relational* character of its constitution and its *continual* need of active constitution.

I reify working class subjectivity then *not* by positing some unchanging essence but rather, by conceptualising their radical embodied condition of "relatedness" to social reality so as to abstract a concept of "substance." I am arguing working class subjectivity constitutes itself by being essentially related and open to objective social conditions (whether relations of employment, housing conditions (*vide* chapter three),

historico-economic conditions of industrial decline etc. (*vide* chapter one)). While recognising that what such a reified conception of working class subjectivity gains by acquiring an accurate conceptualisation of itself, it loses by admitting its own historicism and inevitable obsolescence in the long term because changing relations of production requires this self also changes.

### **2.3 Worry: of Mind & Money**

The condition of *reduction* or the “worked self,” while a product of formal employment relations, reproduces itself or experiences the freedom to “be itself”, in those areas of “selfhood” (e.g. the psyche) customarily hidden from public view and those social spaces outwith formal regulation or supervision (e.g. the local pub). Typically, it is in the interiority of intentionality where the worked self is most likely to be expressed so that it can dominate the private moment or the heart's desire i.e. constitute an interior habitus of intentionality. So it is then that intimate relations, codes of aggression, sexuality, anything requiring an intimate self-presence is in fact socially-mediated so that there is a continual intimate private dialogue with formal and public power structures in the workers' psychic life. On the reach of formal relations of production into the psyche of the worker, Berger and Berger (1975) write regarding the incompatibility between factory work and, for example, native trance states:

A fundamental feature of componentiality intrinsic to the process of technological production is thus carried not only into the area of social relations but also into the intra-subjective area in which the individual defines and experiences his own identity.

(1975: 37).

We normally think of “worrying” as a mental or intentional phenomenon over which we have no control. We spontaneously believe we worry



because we must. In addition to this aspect of necessity there is also often present a physical or bodily aspect to this mental worry; as if it is a rare example where body and mind meet. Finally, following Brentano, to be worried is always to be worried about *something* because it is an intentional act of consciousness. We worry then because it is necessary, it is an embodied mindful phenomenon, and it refers us outside of ourselves to the objective world we inhabit.

Ordinarily we tend to think that the least of all substantive realities is the "human heart" and that "happiness" is the least substantive of all emotions. We often wish we could make our fleeting happiness *substantive*. We take photographs of good times in an effort to *commoditise*, literally reify, happy experiences into a substantive something which we can view *at will* as if to defy the radical synchrony of our emotional structuration. In sharp contrast, we often feel that what does reach a level of substantive permanence is *worry* because, always being related / structured, we often feel we must always worry about something or other. Because the objective social world of the cash-economy must constantly be negotiated then, one's worry or fundamental intentional relation to the world will tend to constitute a mental habitus or intentional horizon.

A consequence of applying structuralist insights to the life of the mind like this is to reject the notion that working class people "think" according to the idea of thought or reason as represented by the modern Cartesian model (*vide* Parry in Overing 1985), and that to suppose otherwise is an error regarding the sociology of mental / intentional life.

Because a fundamental financial insecurity is the "glue of necessity" that keeps locals' structuration "live," being employed is responsible for keeping this constant coping 'invisible' until problematised by events. This constant relatedness is evidenced clearly in the construction of an acceptable identity or sense of self via work. Listening to *East of Scotland* sewage operative Adam tell me he has been a chef, worked in the

building trade, been a miner and now works as a drainage operative, it is clear finding a job is a constant need and has taken continual effort because it is fundamental to constituting one's identity as a real and proper person; as if all the construction work of other identities (as a man, a father, husband, adult etc.) fundamentally rely upon the identity of being employed.

Listening to *East of Scotland Water* manual operatives discuss the pros and cons of the immanent shift to monthly instead of weekly payment is to become aware that an absence of income over three weeks leads to all sorts of pressures being felt; enough for unions and management to make an interest-free bridging loan of one thousand pounds available to employees. Similarly, it is because workers constitute a proletariat (as opposed to a salariat) that week after week, and no doubt in due course month after month, they are forever analyzing and comparing the details of their payslips which are never the same two weeks running.

This financial structuration of the self and its continual occupation of intentionality works to prevent intentionality reaching "escape velocity" so as to engage in the world of meaning as a possible substantive "in itself" mediation of mind. In my experience workers have a hundred and one good reasons for not wasting their time on such matters. The need to keep reproducing money every week is the obvious source of a characteristic psychological and aspirational immediacy which in turn explains their lack of substantivist cultural aspirations. Such considerations became particularly real during a chance conversation with a local in the *Number 1 Goth* in January 2001.

Going in for a quick pint on a cold afternoon I was joined by a local at the bar who announced his car had "packed up." He was drunk and several times he told me he was about to head home to check the gas meter to see if he had enough credit left so he could put the heating on for a couple of hours "withoot feel'n guilty." He told me he thought he had twelve pounds thirty three pence left. "*Fuckin braw*"!

he suddenly shouted causing the barman to look up before going back to setting tables. He told me he will go to bed; that he wants to read in a warm bedroom until he had to "face the music when the wife gets in fae work." He went off to the toilet and I ordered another pint. The pub was empty and in the brief interlude the barman sympathised with me. Returning from the toilet his next topic was complaining about being married.

Writing up this scene at home afterwards I reflected how fragile was this local's relationship to "society" and his ability to maintain his statuses; how money mediated his ability to maintain his structuration and self-concept precisely because his was an existence enthralled immediately to structure. What was involved was more than realising: "*Aye, yer fucked withoot yer car*"; it was that so much is so easily problematised without sufficient money to replace a car; the ability to reproduce the behaviours that constitute the local model of male sociality such as frequenting pubs, buying drinks and running a car became precarious achievements. As Bourdieu has written:

Unemployment is so intensely feared only because economic deprivation is accompanied by a social mutilation.

(1979: 40).

Given such penurious insecurity, what achievement of mind is available to such an intentionality? What could someone achieve if he can derive real pleasure from the fact that he still had twelve pounds of gas left; whose emotional life is constituted such that he can experience what Heidegger has termed "the wordless joy of having once more withstood want" (in Charlesworth 2000: 173) at such a basic level.

Reflecting on his complaints regarding his marital relation it was as if being married he felt all the pressures demanded by the ethereal and ubiquitous "society" took human form and made his economic failure all

the more real and pressing. *"She kens how tae lay it oan. Fuck me! The car's fucked."* Being married meant no longer having control over a spouse's reaction to a condition of lack of money that may wish to remain anonymous and private; that does not want to secede control over its interpretation. Being married meant the facts of his sociality were taken out of his hands precisely when he may have wished to privatise such "moments of danger" (Taussig 1992) that reveal the "state of emergency" (Benjamin) that constitutes the painful geography of being *"at the end e ma tether."*

While nominally I was being told such information this was not a conversation. I became an object to be talked to; my informant did not want a conversation but, I believe, wanted to transfer for a brief interlude, the objectification he felt he had been reduced to by society or the cash economy. As Shakespeare has put it, it was ruin that had taught him to ruminate thus. "Society" was not interested in him as a subject and this galling experience of being objectified and measured and found wanting, had effectively robbed him (no doubt temporarily) of his subjective self worth, and so he had turned to the bottle for comfort. He latched onto me not for human company but to repeat to me the lesson in sociology he himself had just been taught; as if literally, thanks to his suddenly being reduced to his objective financial condition, he did not have the heart to engage with me as a person because his own subjectivity / personality had been so wounded or cowed by reality. It is because at some stage "Money and manliness became integrally linked" (Gilsenan 1996: 282) that the absence of money had had such emasculating effects and had resulted in my informant's 'infantile' resort to drink.

These "moments of poverty" are glimpses of working class subjectivity to be analytically privileged as revelatory of ordinary being and the relations ordinarily constituting an intentional horizon. Being threatened with the end of one's ability to reproduce belonging and participation in locality must have consequences for the emotional life. A prospective reversion

to being back "on the parish" where society threatens to be no longer possible, means the social self is threatened with its end; and as there is no self that is not socially mediated, this means the existential facing of the "end of self;" a self that has not simply "*its own otherness*" (Crapanzano 1992) an integral part of its 'dialogic self' but has its very non-existence, its socially mediated *destruction*, part and parcel of its existential self-awareness; something which must fundamentally mark any ego even where this has not in fact happened. Hence the person and personality whose constitution bears no history of needing to have in-built concessions and accommodations to the sovereignty of objective economic realities appears "unreal."

Privileging an intentional horizon that is most likely to remain hidden and only made discursively visible by the chance crapulent monologue of a local in a pub clearly implies a problem of ethnographic evidencing, as such revealing moments will be suppressed and not talked about because they are the "private" fears and insecurities each individual will normally "disappear" by struggling through and finding gainful employment. Being employed 'disappears' this major structural dialectic: one's true subjective condition and objective structured position, a relentless financial relatedness or vulnerability that only by being employed can this existential truth be concealed.

A sociality based upon the cash-nexus can only require of itself that it survives such a society; least of all required are representational practices or the attempt to understand such a society. Indeed such a sociality whose only dues are money often produces discourses that claim such is all there is to understand about society; that when this basic social obedience is achieved, can even imagine itself free to be indifferent to society. Living so intimately with financial pressures, such thinking becomes common-sensical and normal; in fact often becomes the extent of thinking because it is the extent of one's experience of the demands of social reality. Working class consciousness is radically *structural* insofar as its basic condition is a vulnerable condition and its *raison d'etre* is to

overcome this condition in order to reproduce itself i.e. to cope, and thereby not make of this aspect of itself an existential "something" visible via unemployment, but remain in the security of (employed) structuration.

How then can this level of reality be evidenced when the point of coping is to render it "merely memory"; when a culture and subjectivity is defined by its overcoming these 'determinations', how does the ethnographer re-open these closures? The ethnographer can attempt to look to see how it is mediated among those who fail to be successful; who fail week after week to "escape" their basic conditioning. Yet this "evidencing group" of the unemployed is the group least likely to articulate their condition.

Paradoxically, the closer someone lives out this basic structuration the less likely he or she will voice this condition. The closer one is forced to one's psychological, emotional and intellectual structured condition of vulnerable being-in-the-world, the less one is able to constitute this condition in an open and deliberative fashion. Only *failure* then reveals one's "true" condition, one's "true" self or "true" emotional life and paradoxically, only failure therefore can constitute an authentic intellectual life, can generate a true act of self-understanding.

If emotions of fear and anxiety occur when one's structural objectivity is apprehended existentially, then necessarily in a cash economy, this occurs only in conditions of financial vulnerability as, in secure conditions, such moments have no cause to arise and impress themselves onto one's intentional horizon as data of one's self to thereby constitute one's existential self. Only failure and crisis triggers the "real" emotional patterning.

The working class "self" then is no substantive something always present even to the working class person, to be apprehended as an easily available object of reflection. The structuralist nature of the working class



self as it is revealed in these moments of vulnerable danger means the working class subject, to grasp his own substantiality, must grasp the objective "triggering mechanisms" of his subjectivity that make these patterned feelings live within him or herself.<sup>6</sup> But because the price to be paid for any such sustained reflection on this ground is failure, what is actually revealed is why working class consciousness is traditionally incapable of a phenomenology of itself. The paradox then is that should the task be to produce an ethnography, a culture, a literature, a psychology or self-understanding, obtaining financial security means the inability to produce what Csordas (1994) has termed "the existential ground of culture and self." Because being successful necessarily means becoming distant from this original positioning which could furnish working class consciousness with the phenomenological data of itself, there is a *personal* and *existential* element to the disappearance of a "stand-alone" working class intentional horizon.

Another structural factor in the "disappearance" of the urgency of reifying this existential conditioning is the Welfare State intervention which provides a guaranteed minimum income, free health care and state pension etc. It can not be said often enough that these measures remain fundamental to the condition of the working class and this broad sweep of "relief measures" dissipates the urgency and reality of vulnerability, and likewise dissipates and disappears the need for or the likelihood of reifying this self into a substantive thing-in-itself subject matter for a reflexive project.

I argue that from 1945 it has become progressively more difficult to constitute a self-identity and a politics on the basis of a working class standpoint because the state has intervened so decisively to transform and ameliorate much of what is taken to be the "traditional" experience of being working class. Paradoxically, it is because existence and

---

<sup>6</sup> This in my view would represent the point at which a shift from a structuralist to a substantivist point of view would legitimately occur.

socialism were integrated politically after 1945 that helps explain the current 'crisis' where they seem irreparably separated.

A theme of retired working people is criticising those living off state benefits; as if there is a psychological release in criticising other locals for not working because of what is perceived as a wilful refusal to constitute one's life by responding 'honourably' to the material and financial facts of life i.e. earning an honest crust. At the opposite extreme is criticism for those who are seen to accumulate immoderate sums of money. The revelation of the late Donald Dewar being a multi-millionaire in July 2001 did not go un-noticed or commented upon. When discussing the perceived corruption of politicians in the aftermath of the Conservative peer Lord Archer's incarceration for perjury in July 2001, Mick Kelman commented:

How the fuck is he [Donald Dewar] supposed tae represent us, the workin class eh? A fuckin Labour MP and he's supposed tae represent the workin class in, where is it, Anniesland in Glesgae an he's a fuckin multi-millionaire? What the fuck is that aa aboot? Ah bet they Glesgae cunts in their two thoosan pound cooncil hooses must feel like fuckin muppets votin fir that cunt. Ah mean how the fuck can somebody be a multi-millionaire an be a fuckin Labour MP? How the fuck is that possible?<sup>7</sup>

A week prior to this comment, my wife Eva was saying goodbye to a local couple before leaving for Spain. In their kitchen hung a notice board of family photographs and other momentos and souvenirs. I noticed a clipping from the local *Central Fife Times* newspaper's letters to the editor section. I reproduce here the letter cut out and pinned to the board:

---

<sup>7</sup> Mick was referring to the widespread perception of Glasgow being synonymous with poverty and the fact that Donald Dewar was the Labour MP for Glasgow Anniesland; officially one of the poorest

## **A Shocker**

I enclose an extract from a letter carried in the Courier and Advertiser.

"A 65 year-old man who has worked all his life and paid national insurance and income tax for the past 50 years was entitled to a retirement pension of £115.40 per week for himself and his wife.

Meanwhile, a similar couple who have lived off state benefits and have never paid a penny into the system all their lives are entitled to £140.55 per week plus rent, rates and all other handouts available."

These figures were apparently provided by and guaranteed correct by an official of the DSS in the Dundee area. Now one could just imagine the dismay and shock experienced by our local MP The Right Hon Gordon Brown when advised of this completely immoral and bizarre situation.

Indeed Mr Brown was so upset he found himself unable to reply to letters concerning this apparent anomaly.

SPION KOP, Lochgelly.

When I asked the householder why he had cut out and pinned this particular letter to his notice board he replied: "Jist a reminder."

## **2.3 Constructions of Personhood**

A traditional source of discourse in the pub among men in particular is football. Football traditionally mediates both local and national identity as well as locals' own biographies and so is a site for establishing locals' belonging to their particular sub-locality within the village such as Bowhill or Dundonald. Aestival football tournaments in the village for young boys between each local area encourage such identity-formation.

The highly valued time spent in a "collective privacy" where workers can be most themselves by being absent from shared objective relations often means in the pub there is a conspicuous and highly valued absence of formality and a conspicuous friendliness (*vide* Plant 1979; Douglas

---

constituencies in Britain. The reference to "two thoosan pound Cooncil hooses" refers to the average market value of a Glasgow city council house being less than £2000.

1987). As already indicated, objective social conditions enter into the intimate practices of masculinity, belonging, generosity and performances of exchange which Mauss characterised with such words as "liberality" and "honour" in buying and taking drinks when among themselves.

On Boxing Day (1998) going into the *Auld Man's Shelter* pub with Dauve, on the door we were faced with graffiti in the shape of an erect pudenda. "Does that mean men only?" I joked. "Adults only" Dauve replied as we headed inside. In the pub we were both "kent faces" and, typically, there was a familiar and relaxed atmosphere. At the bar itself people stand drinking and chatting. The chat is social banter as opposed to private conversation as the continual coming and going of customers with orders prevents any real privacy. Along with drinking, conversation and the swapping of news and stories is continual.

A particular genre of stories are tales of fights or "bother" that occur locally. Such anecdotes often begin by someone mentioning there was trouble in a particular pub the night before, and this can spontaneously lead to a whole repertoire about other similar events among younger locals. On this particular Boxing Day I am told such a tale by Dauve. He began: "It wis the day Scotland beat Estonia two nil. Two guys fae Kirkcaldy..." and goes on to recall his fight with "a stranger" who had pushed the *Railway Tavern* barmaid when making his way outside to see how the other stranger from Kirkcaldy was "gettin on" in another fight with another local (Billy Cuthbert). The pushing of the local barmaid was the necessary excuse for him to start to fight. Dauve enjoyed telling the story and of the respect gained by "layin' the boy oot." Violence constitutes a breach in normal relations and is often narrated as a necessary means of maintaining and protecting boundaries and such anecdotes are a highly prized item of gossip, commentary and even hagiography (*vide* Gilsenan 1996: 52-54).

Violent behaviour normally occurs only among younger men so that should it continue after social maturity has been reached, such behaviour would quickly be commented on as evidence of some form of idiosyncratic pathology. Violence is only ever appropriate among men (never among women) until other roles such as father, husband or simply "older" are appropriated, so that the age factor is important in mellowing behaviour and any particular individual leaving behind a "hard man" reputation does so without feeling he must lose respect. As Myers has argued regarding the function of violence among the Pintupi in Australia:

...violence offers a way of sustaining and producing an image of the self. As such, it is tolerated as an acceptable form of action. Nonetheless, identity with others constitutes the primary condition and expectation of life, deeply embedded in personal experiences. When the capacity to complete oneself through relationship with others is threatened or prevented, the resort to violence establishes one's own will.

(1991:179).

### **Scotland v England**

Given Kellas's observation that "working class nationalism is generally related to culture and football" (in Harvie 1998: 19) an opportune moment to witness constructions of the nation and national identity was a football match between Scotland and England in the play-off stage for *Euro 2000* (13 November 1999) which was screened live in several of the local pubs. I watched the game at *The Railway Tavern* (which had closed "permanently" in 1995 only to re-open a year later under new ownership). This particular day proved to be the occasion for the most obvious performances of *communitas* I experienced throughout fieldwork. In the crowded pub were over a hundred locals (mostly men) singing, shouting, laughing, drinking and talking. Saltires, lion rampants, painted faces and scarves were everywhere one looked. Chants began and everyone immediately joined

in. There was an overwhelming good-natured atmosphere which dominated every available space. At the far end of the lounge area was a large television screen which everyone sat facing keeping an eye on, if not actually listening to, the pre-match build-up.

Before kick-off I listened to Vickie describing how earlier in the day she had telephoned her English brother-in-law and had played the unofficial national anthem *Flower of Scotland* to him down the phone. After this stunt she told us her brother-in-law matter of factly asked if she wanted to speak with her sister. Vickie used the anecdote to illustrate national difference when she concluded:

*He never even mentioned it. Imagine doing that o'er the phone and he never even mentioned it. Of course he's English eh!*

I started talking to Drew who caught me unawares telling me a joke with a straight concerned face:

Drew: *Ah see Leena Zavaroni left millions when she died there.*  
Aye? Is that right. Ah never heard that.  
Drew: *Aye, apparently she left a few million in dinner vouchers.*<sup>8</sup>

An overt expression of nationalist sentiment I heard during the pre-match build-up came from Dave Anderson, a man in his late thirties who had been working in England. He told us he had "been gettin it aa week...Oh the Jocks this and the Jocks that on the telly" (imitating an English upper-class accent). His economic "exile" seemed to elicit a nationalist rhetoric when he concluded his thoughts on working "abroad" in the previous week by saying: "*Aye, we'll see how they fuckin like it when we aa vote SNP.*" This was said after describing how he had established common Labour-voting ground with his English colleagues at work. Clearly, back home, his real

---

<sup>8</sup> This once-popular singer had suffered from anorexia nervosa.



self and politics could be admitted. Another pre-match comment of note came from Billy, a furniture warehouse worker, who said: "The English are no happy unless they're oppressin somebody." Such comments are said without fear of contradiction and are not deemed in need of discursive justification. Similarly, I recall three *East of Scotland Waters* workers talking about the construction of a new wastewater treatment plant in Leven a few yards from where one of the workers lived. The conversation was as follows:

Gary: Aye ye'll be gettin disturbed wi aa the noise.

David: Aye, ye'll get a reduction in yer poll tax.

Ivor: Ah'll be oot there wi ma binoculars seein what's gone oan.

Gary: Like that English cunt in Kinghorn. Always phonin tae say 'ye can smell it fae here'.

David: Jist in the place. In the toon and they're takin it o'er.

Ivor: Aye. Ye get that.

At this the conversation shifted seamlessly to talking about other ongoing changes to other plants. Such remarks and conversations I could easily multiply. Amongst *East of Scotland Water* workers, statements such as "Ah hate the fuckin arrogant English cunts," or conversations regarding what is perceived, especially regarding international football media coverage, as an insufferable English national conceit are an integral part of workers' discourse amongst themselves.

The media's mediation of the political relationship of union between Scotland and England to the (perceived) disadvantage of Scotland has a long and banal history in the biography of Scots. Generations of working class Scots in the television programme *Saturday Grandstand*, for example, have had to watch (or not watch) the likes of cricket and rugby

league which are deemed "English" sports. Such observations (and analysis) are banal indeed, so that they are only ever actually said very rarely while still remaining deep cultural realities framing locals' experience.

When the football match began the social chat ended. All attention was now directed at the events being transmitted live from Hampden Park in Glasgow. From the frenetic scenes and behaviour, it is plain locals positively relish identifying themselves wherever possible with these national sporting occasions as a welcome opportunity and means of expressing and constituting *communitas*, so that the whole day acted like a shibboleth of identity; a site for the performance of signifying practices of belonging.

Just as in chapter one where I highlighted the fact that a certain caution must be exercised whereby a legitimate representation of "disintegration" must not slip into a caricature of endemic anomie, so when representing the heart of what it is that goes on in pubs and men's conversations therein, despite tales of violence and the often undeniable destructive aspects that occur when alcohol and aggression are mixed, what must be communicated is the importance of humour and verbal improvisation. Locals are masters in their own *habitus* so that their many, in fact relentless, improvised *ad libs* are done *ad libitum* (i.e. according to pleasure) and are sourced in the embodied integration of id, identity and ideology (or discourse) referred to earlier.<sup>9</sup>

At such occasions it seemed as if locals came alive to a preferred sense of themselves when in a "confrontative" relationship with some imagined or televised Other; as if this Other is something required to experience their favoured sense of themselves. These highly-valued set-piece occasions

---

<sup>9</sup> It is practically impossible to communicate the humour and playfulness of working class discourse in pubs. One can only advert to the fact that locals regularly excoriate other locals for example who come from Dundonald as being "mountain men" and are made the subject of songs titled "Feed Dundonald" sung to the tune of the nineteen eighties *Band Aid* charity song *Feed The World* or the lyrics of Elvis Presley's song *Heartbreak Hotel* being adapted to the characters and events in the local *Central Hotel* pub.

highlight the structural nature of their identity, something only able to be experienced outwith the homogenous and drab (by comparison) everyday reality where normally there are no high points of structured relatedness i.e. identity-constituting moments, because “difference” is not encountered on a day-to-day basis.

Such conspicuous displays of identity were attractive and enjoyable because, unlike the local *Fun Day*, they provided locals with the opportunity to celebrate their integral selves where a triangulation of id, identity and ideology are aligned in an integral experience of their gendered, local, class, and national selves. It not only re-creates but expresses an already constituted and integrated self. The day was so enjoyable because of its being that public space where locals can constitute themselves as a group *not* in any competition among themselves but united in contest against an other.

As a general thesis then I propose that class “makes sense of” or mediates the nation but does not constitute the nation or national identity. While the idea of the nation pre-dates the rise of class society, the experience of being working class mediates the experiencing of being Scottish; being working class involves the possession of an affective / cognitive matrix which maps the experience and meaning of what being ‘national’ means, as well as a certain “libidinal economy” of expressing this identity which often necessarily operates beyond “representational thinking” so that, while difficult to capture in writing, it is clear and obvious when among locals.

It is *not* something named nationalism then that possesses the power to produce the “structure of feeling” or the integral triangulation of id, identity and ideology that makes nationalism appropriatable, makes it possible for informants to intuitively recognise something of themselves or something *for* themselves in it. This is an erroneous conception of working class nationalism. Rather, it is the embodied habitus’ ability to produce a “likeness of itself”, an integral connection to the nation and

national identity that makes a *working class* nationalism possible; and it is this pool of identification practices that is *subsequently politicised* into nationalism so that to the extent that any particular form of nationalism (such as the respectable "civic nationalism" of the SNP leadership, far less the "Unionist nationalism" of devolution) that does not "obey" this class mediation, is unsuccessful among the working class.

Informants supporting their national football team exhibit belonging to the nation, locality and each other via their performing gestures, and the more visceral the better as one "informant" graphically demonstrated with both hands on top of a table. There is an immediate (though clearly highly socialised) fusion of "self and nation" because the eleven men they see are judged ordinary working class lads who come from working class localities like Cardenden and who have been lucky enough to "make the grade". There is little sense of "imagining" the nation or their appropriation of it as some abstraction over and against the self.

To qualify for "membership" is not a matter of an ideological agreement with propositions but a matter of "feeling" Scottish via a class-based embodied habitus i.e. using subjectivity in all its traditional *ad sensum* bawdy idiom to perform these practices of being Scottish. It is the existence of such a self, as opposed to some other superficial in comparison means, that the national becomes personal and the personal becomes national.

A number of anthropologists have ethnographically analysed this integration of reason and emotion and have privileged the body as an ethnographic site of "emotional reason" (e.g. Lienhardt 1980; Rosaldo 1980; Heelas 1981 and Lewis 1980). Similarly, informants use their bodies to "perform" their nationality. They do not have at their disposal an intellectual habitus whereby a history of Whiggish myths, for example, can be opposed so that they can constitute their nationalism by. Such a world of meaning that the intellectual inhabits is not available as a mediation of national identity to the average working class person.

Locals 'make do' with international football, for example, because it is one site where is possible the public and individual expression of one's national identity via the working class 'structure of feeling'. Football is thought of as *the* working class sport and this working class sport is an example of class and nation coming together in integral self-expression. Importantly, this integral identity is capable of producing celebration, community and spectacle.

In this chapter I have argued that the experience of a life of manual labour is deeply integrating; that it is via work that the worker reproduces a constitution of himself as a particular body-subject, and establishes within an ontological tradition and personal existential connection to his class and culture that is unavailable any other way. Concentrating on the body as a locus for ethnography, I have argued that the "worked body" like any other reification or "essence" is the product of social relations, but relations that are enduring enough to mean the effects they produce in the subject are sufficiently real to have an autonomy and analytical category of their own.

In the next chapter I develop further a structuralist conception of reality; in particular the crisis in the reproduction of the fundamental structures of locality begun in chapter one by developing further the particular structuration of the '79 generation in particular by exploring how locals experience day-to-day living structural / economic decline and superstructural / ideological change. It is time then to "get real" and deal with such fundamental aspects of structure and relations as neighbours and housing.

## The Mediation & Eviction of Difference

This is a terrible place tae live; a terrible  
place tae live.

Mrs Davidson  
53 Cardenden Road  
22 January 1999

Ah used tae say it's no the hooses they want  
tae regenerate; it's the tenants.

James  
*Housing Studies* student  
17 December 1998

### 3.1 The End of "Home Rule"

From the outset fieldwork was dominated by the process of evicting an anti-social neighbour. While this proved to be an invaluable condition for learning unsuspected aspects of working class structuration, with the benefit of hindsight I made a poor decision accepting 51 Cardenden Road as a living space for my family. The prior tenant (Mrs. Ellen Guild) had given some warning about noise levels of the neighbour upstairs but had also insisted we would "be happy" in the flat; that it was "a very sunny happy flat." Also, as we had been on Fife Council housing list for over a year, I was keen to be able to bring my family from Cordoba in



Spain. Eva and I signed the tenancy on Monday 17th August; finally being able to begin fieldwork also meant being able to begin our married life together in Cardenden.

Because a pre-requisite to being in the field meant obtaining a Council flat, I was struck by the extent the Council housing process is in control of the ability to live locally. Highlighting the difficulties involved in simply being present in Cardenden to do research, or simply to be housed, is to highlight a lack of personal agency in being able to resolve housing problems independently of local government bureaucracy. Because private renting opportunities in Cardenden are few and far between, the only other renting option locally was to apply to *Auchterderran Housing Association* (now known as *Ore Valley Housing Association*) for a tenancy. Before fieldwork I completed an application form. Chatting to one of the employees, he informed me of the problem of houses being used as what he called "giro drops" i.e. where individuals present themselves as homeless, having split up (normally) from their wives, and so qualify for a Housing Association tenancy as well as an increase in social security benefits (i.e. giro money) on account of being a single tenant, while in fact they have not moved from their previous household and so their tenancy is only sought as a "giro drop."

Such practices are common knowledge and along with social security fraud in general, is a constant presence in letters to the editor of the local newspaper the *Central Fife Times*. I reproduce the latest of such letters from Thursday, 6th September 2001:

### **Why do they get away with it?**

It is no wonder there are so many homeless people in Scotland. Here in Fife and elsewhere you have people living often as not with someone else.

While the council house or flat lies empty, they get their rent paid by the DHS. They often do not pay council tax yet they continue to cheat and lie their way into keeping the

council house that some genuine family or  
single person needs very badly.  
So why do the DHS and councils continue to let  
these spongers in society away with this fraud?  
SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR ALL,  
Cardenden.

Whatever the illusions of stranded American novelists "simply staying here" (Atkinson 1995), my experience of being in Cardenden throughout fieldwork was far from simple and only because day-to-day relations became so relentlessly problematic, only because I was forced to live through and experienced being constituted by the relations I am about to describe, did a basic structuralist point of view emerge to the forefront of how I analytically conceive working class experience in general and working class nationalism in particular.

Living with problematic neighbours involved such fundamental issues as to render the construction of sociality and the experience of *communitas* highly problematic. Everyday life became something of a lottery where any particular day was at the mercy of the night before, which was at the mercy of upstairs neighbours. What did become a matter of routine was the repeated and failed attempt to constitute any sort of *modus vivendi*.

### **First Phase: 17 August 1998 - 7 December 1998**

Shortly after moving into 51 Cardenden Road two *Housing Investigations Officers* from Fife Council called to our door. The purpose of their visit was to inform us they were in the process of investigating the neighbour immediately above us at number 57 as they had received a number of complaints of anti-social behaviour and problems with noise. In the course of the meeting we were given a supply of forms to be completed, which would be collected and used "*as evidence*" by the *Housing Investigation Team* in a court of law, should a mediation process prove unsuccessful and the Council sought an eviction order. We were advised that the gathering of information on our neighbour's anti-social behaviour was necessary in order to secure eviction. We were

asked to compile a *Neighbour Complaint Incident Diary* which involved giving information under nine headings:

1. *Date & Time of Incident*
2. *Where did the incident occur?*
3. *Brief details of what happened*
4. *Who did it?*
5. *Any Witnesses?*
6. *Do you have their names and addresses?*
7. *Did you report it to anyone?*
8. *If so who? (e.g. Area Office, Police)*
9. *Any other complaints?*

When I queried the effectiveness of proposed counselling sessions and numerous "last warnings" discussed during the course of the meeting, the confident reply was "*We have the law, and nobody beats the law*" (Stuart MacQueen).

In due course the reason for complaints to the Council became clear: main door buzzers sounding 'continually' through the night awakening neighbours; routinely having to answer our intercom in the middle of the night as some unidentified voice didn't know the correct flat (i.e. number 57) to buzz so that we soon learned to keep our intercom permanently 'off' at night; smoke alarms sounding in the early morning hours while food was being prepared, as well as an habitual coming and going of individuals and groups and loud noise and music at all hours of the night.

Being awakened and driven from our beds by locals making noise or playing loud music in the flat above became an expected and regular event. In the beginning Eva and I would settle on the sofa in the living room with cup of tea in hand and look incredulously at each other. "Look what you have made me come to live with" Eva would complain. We would fall to listening when we realised we could make out pieces of conversation from the flat above. For the first few occasions we pretended to ourselves and friends that listening and counting the

number of times "fuck" or some other expletive was used in a sentence could be entertaining.

Such show of forbearance quickly evaporated. To convey everyday life I reproduce an excerpt from my field journal concerning one incident:

*Thursday 11 a.m. 18 November [1998]. I go to clean the stairs and common stairs and entrance hall at my flat. I hear from the first floor above a neighbour's daughter about to leave her mum's flat complain "Oh who's aa this noo?" I look up. About to enter the main door are four young people making for number 57, the problem tenant. First to enter is a young woman whom I recognise from previous occasions.<sup>1</sup> She is followed in single file by three young men. The first one I look at. He is gaunt with short cropped hair and two or three small round gold coloured earrings in his left ear. He looks old and he is thin. With a grin he says "A'right?" to me in passing. I don't answer. I look at the next one passing. Young again with fair hair with his Rangers football sweatshirt on. I get back to cleaning and listen to the mumblings that follow the silence of passing. When they reach the middle floor I hear the words "...he's a housewife" passed among them. The insult stings and reveals the muted conflict going on all around. A challenge has been made. I look up and am thinking to reply "An Ah suppose your a hard workin man". But this is too cruel, too thought out and personal an attack so I settled on my own counter-mumbling retort of "fuckin prick" just loud enough in the direction of the middle landing. Amid the ensuing mumble, I realise my counter-insult had been heard and await nervously their response. I can only make out "...come doon there an fuck you" in a threatening tone. Nothing more is said. They go into number 57 and I finish cleaning the stairs and go back inside my flat. A few minutes later trying to leave the flat I can't turn the door handle. Puzzled, I try the handle again harder but there is something blocking the handle. I look through the letterbox and*

---

<sup>1</sup> A single mother of two whom had been evicted from her Council tenancy some weeks before.

*see someone has jammed a brush I left in the entrance hall against the door handle.*

This journal entry, written when I had no thought whatsoever to deal ethnographically with neighbour relations, is indicative of the deterioration of interpersonal communication when day-to-day living became characterised by having to confront the continual threat of confrontation and animus. It was only ever myself and Tracey who lived at number 63, directly above number 57, who approached the neighbour in an effort to speak to her or complain directly. We each bore the brunt of the problem and very soon after moving in our friendship stemmed from our shared problem.

By the time of our arrival the particular problem within our block of nine two-bedroom flats was ongoing, having started a year or so before we moved in. Upon realising the scale of the problem, we were dismayed that our landlord had no responsibility to inform us. It seemed incredible that a landlord, who was in the process of investigating complaints against our immediate neighbour, had a housing allocation policy that meant prospective tenants were not allowed to know a minimum of information so as to make an informed choice about whether or not to accept an offer of a tenancy. Due to tenants' rights to confidentiality and the police being "*unable to discuss details*," the only source of such background information was neighbours themselves who had no "ethical" or "professional" concerns about sharing information.

Alan and Tracy at number 63 informed myself and Eva that the police had raided number 57 and lifted floorboards searching for drugs; that the police were constantly in attendance at the flat; that it was used as a meeting point for other local problem tenants and their children; was in effect a "gang hut" for local unemployed youth and that the police came calling as a matter of routine to collect children who were subject to a court order requiring them to be with their parent(s) or legal guardians at specified times.

As the journal entry quoted earlier indicates, so fraught was having to negotiate the immediate environs of the flats that neighbours felt unable to occupy the space between their door and the street with a sense of security. This was brought home to me (no pun intended) when returning from work one day at four-thirty in the afternoon to find our front door locked. Asking Eva why the door was locked she admitted, rather shamefacedly, "I don't feel safe here."

Having to negotiate one's way to and fro day-after-day became problematic so that a knock-on effect was neighbour relations were kept to a minimum and, when interaction did occur, it was likely to be dominated by the latest disturbance. Hence, when cleaning the common stairwell Mrs Davidson (number 53) would often come out for a chat and, immediately, the topic of conversation would be neighbours, the chronic failure of the cleaning rota or some other neighbour-related issue. In one sentence and with one continuous movement she would point above her head with her walking stick complaining: "*Her up there's just as bad...and her over there* [turning to Carol-Anne at number 49] *she never cleans. Ah've never seen her cleaning. And them up there...*"

Mrs Davidson was an old woman and seemed to repeat *ad nauseam* how she did not feel secure day or night in her home. Apart from her daughter who visited her daily, her relations with her neighbours was more or less non-existent. I have no doubt she complained to me so often because I was one neighbour who made myself available for these tirades, which perhaps had become the only form of "agency" available to her.

As for my own attempts at "agency," some time previously I had finally managed to speak to and put a face to the name of my problem neighbour (Shirley More) at the third attempt at complaining about noise. Only at the third attempt did the tenant actually come to the door. On the first two occasions the music was turned down. The first time I had spoken to somebody who was not the tenant; on the second occasion



when I complained about noise, a woman's voice came from behind the closed door saying "*The music's been turned doon*" in an irritated tone of voice. Whoever was in refused to open the door to speak to me, eventually telling me "*The door's locked an Ah dinnae have a key.*"

With effect from November 4th 1998 a *Notice Of Proceedings* was issued by Fife Council against the tenant. This meant the tenant was informed that the landlord had officially begun the process of seeking a court order to evict. However, because the process of eviction is so lengthy, involving the ex-tenant not being able to be on the Council housing list for ten years and forfeiting their statutory right to be housed, the actual number of evictions are small in comparison to complaints received and the number of investigations of anti-social behaviour each Housing Investigation Officer is dealing with at any one time. More often than not to speed up the process of removing anti-social tenants, Fife Council "advise" (although in an interview with the housing investigation officer involved, Stuart MacQueen, I was told they do not "advise" any course of action to the tenant), the problem tenant that because they *will* be evicted at the term of a legal process, their best option is to sign a form which means they surrender their tenancy "voluntarily." This allows the tenant back onto the Council housing waiting list after one year has passed. Hence, it is normally the *threat* of eviction that actually evicts problem tenants according to the housing investigations officers.

Shortly after the tenant was evicted on December 7<sup>th</sup> I arranged a meeting with a local Council official (Greg) in the Cardenden local area office in an effort to request they take some thought as to who they allocated number 57 to. While waiting in the reception area of the Council office, I noticed a mural of a colliery modelled on Bowhill Colliery on the floor, and an assortment of leaflets detailing state benefits available to former miners who have developed health problems as a consequence of having worked in the mines. I was anxious at the prospect of the meeting as I was fully aware of our "presumption" in

requesting the meeting at all. Unsurprisingly perhaps, the meeting went badly as our request for some thought on the part of the Council was not welcome given the irritated, in fact, incredulous reception our request was met with. In a rather fraught exchange I recall saying: "*We are here because if you can make a mistake once, then you will probably do it again*". The official was not impressed at our desire to be part of the housing allocations procedure, at our presumption to a form of devolution to sitting tenants to ensure some measure of "home rule."

When I attempted to establish the rationale behind why I had not been informed of the ongoing situation of anti-social neighbours before I originally signed my lease, and Eva and I had spent our savings furnishing a home from scratch, we were told that what was or was not happening with an other tenant was a confidential matter and, besides, the Council official was not aware of having received any complaints about my neighbour. To my point that neighbours at number 63 had informed us the police had raided the house on two occasions I was told:

*Well you're telling me that but I have no evidence. Who is to say what is unreasonable noise? I need proof.*

This was the response from a local area office Council employee whose colleagues in the *Housing Investigations Team* had previously visited us at home to advise we begin collecting evidence against our neighbour to be used in a court of law to secure a *Notice of Proceedings* leading to an eviction order.

Although told in no uncertain terms that housing allocation policy meant whoever happened to be next on the waiting list would be offered the tenancy, we took comfort from the assurance from the student on his work placement that: '*We will do our best to make sure the person is suitable*'. The merest hint of complaisance from

bureaucracy was greeted with heartfelt relief and, walking home, Eva and I congratulated ourselves at having "done something."

The opinion of neighbours as to who was at the top of the housing list was that it was one of two single women. Talking to Carol Anne at number 49, of the two candidates agreement was reached that one was "quieter" than the other. In the event, the relaxed mood among the neighbours lasted until word spread that the tenancy had been offered to another unemployed local single woman (Sharon Cross). The news was not encouraging as the family were a large family described in euphemistic terms such as "pretty low class" and the more idiomatic vernacular, "*They're rough as fuck.*"

### **Second Phase: 9 December 1998 – 7 February 2000**

What I am calling the first phase of anti-social neighbours dominated fieldwork from August until our neighbour was "evicted" on December 7th 1998. The second phase began when the new tenant took up residence from January 1999 until our last night spent in 51 Cardenden Road (February 7th 2000). With the eviction of the first problem tenant there was a collective sigh of relief as the residents in the block celebrated in every conversation with each other the return of "home rule" and the re-possession of shared space. We joked among ourselves that it felt as if *we* were re-housed; as if we could repossess our house again and dwell as a family. I remember lying in bed at night confidently enjoying the silence and being able to say, "At last I can start fieldwork."

Initially, to avoid having to give full disclosure of what was happening inside myself and family, I felt compelled *not* to write ethnographically of the problem of anti-social living conditions. Prior to fieldwork I had the strong prejudice of someone who had never had to realise my view was there was nothing *substantial* about the significance of housing. Pre-fieldwork "the house" was an invisible category of no significance for working class structuration. Only the experience of anti-social

neighbours forced me to look at the issue of housing as a constituting category of how locals experience and construct everyday life and so I began to view the process of eviction as a source of data and standpoint from which to understand local housing issues and related structural issues of unemployment, changes in family structure, the welfare state and neighbour relations, as integral factors producing the overall effect glossed as "everyday life."

Entering the field I had thought my interest in housing matters would extend to obtaining a tenancy, at which point I would enter the field and explore the current construction of working class nationalism. Due to unarticulated assumptions as to what was "good" and "bad" research data, the major reason for not wanting what was happening to me and my family to "intrude" into my research was the view that the experience was too personal to be of worth anthropologically. Absurdly, what was happening in the field I construed as interfering with my research because my own field 'shadow dialogues' i.e. *"the thinking about the dialogue that occurs as one engages silently in dialogue with absent interlocuters"* (Crapanzano 1992: 196) i.e. the anthropological / academic community, lead me to conclude anti-social neighbours and the data gathered from this aspect of day-to-day living were too "vulgar" to be included in my ethnography.

Only believing the problem was over did I feel sufficient distance from problem neighbours to take time to begin incorporating it into my research even while feeling finally free to put the experience behind me and begin detailing the social environment around the flats.

On December 10th (1998) leaving the flat to do some shopping I noticed a headline board outside a shop advertising the day's top headline: *Scotland's Children of the Damned*. Next door to the newsagent is a hairdresser's shop not yet open. On its wooden shutters I noticed fresh graffiti:

Mellon Wiz Ere

and,

Rikki M. Sucks Cock for 10p.

While in the newsagents I waited for the shop assistant to check if Eva's *El Pais* newspaper had arrived. I overheard two women talking about a local woman who had been sacked for stealing petty cash in a shop in Bowhill. Next I headed to the local *Costcutter* mini supermarket. Locals remember this building as "the Store" i.e. the Co-op since before the war. In the nineteen-eighties the Co-op closed and locals successfully managed to keep it open as "The Community Store". Initially this venture proved to be a successful and popular local attempt at maintaining community and was publicised in the local press as an example to be followed by other villages. Unfortunately, after a few years this effort ended due to a lack of profit so that today it is run and managed by the *Costcutter* chain of stores.

Waiting to be served I noted an assortment of "Milk Tokens" pinned to the perspex barrier separating customers and staff. Each token has a name written on it and an ongoing record of the amount of milk credit left. Such tokens are part of a government "Welfare Food Scheme" administered by the *Department of Social Security* for those on state benefits with young children. I asked the assistant about them and she mentioned it was not unknown for those in receipt of such tokens to ask if they could exchange their cash value for cigarettes instead of milk.

Returning to the flat I met a neighbour living upstairs at number fifty-nine coming out. She began a conversation by asking: "Enjoy a quiet night last night?" in reference to the recent eviction of the problem tenant. She asked if I knew who has been allocated the vacant tenancy. I told her another local woman. She asked what I knew of her; if she was married or single but before I could answer she informed me that her upstairs neighbour's (Yvonne) child was "like a baby elephant when he runs across the room." This was the first occasion I was able to have a real conversation with this neighbour having had normal



relations suspended for the previous four months. This first conversation provided us with the opportunity to introduce ourselves properly and exchange personal information.

She told me when first married she was in a maisonette in Glenrothes and then progressed to a flat; that "every time" she would prefer a top floor flat with nobody above her. I told Alan's story of how the police had ripped up the floorboards of number 57 to which she matter-of-factly replied: "It'll be fir drugs. That's the way it is these days wi young folk. They're aa intae the drugs noo here."

She lit a roll up cigarette and told me that her mother had lived in her council house for forty-four years; that she had died four years ago and she had "put in" for her mother's house but did not get it. Her mother had been the only tenant in the house which was originally built for miners and that "noo the police have been in it; raided the place fir drugs. We still think e it as ma mum's hoose ye ken." She told me she was originally from Ballingry and had moved to England where her two sons remain but who:

...will not move up here tae Scotland. They're mair English than Scottish. They were jist young boys when they went doon. They even talk English; they dinnae speak Scottish. They dinnae want tae come up.

The first meeting with my new neighbour occurred when, well after midnight and unable to sleep due to the noise of walls being scraped and music from a radio, I got out of bed to ask the new neighbour to "keep the noise down." When the door was opened by a girlfriend of the tenant helping with the redecoration, the conversation was conducted in its entirety with myself standing at the door and, the friend holding the front door ajar, the tenant remaining seated on the floor with her back



against the far wall of the front bedroom with cigarette and scraper in hand.

Unwilling to stand in acknowledgement or greeting, her monosyllabic responses "Aye" or "Right" evidenced an unwillingness to engage in the most basic conventions of comportment or recognition. A ready monosyllabic agreement to "keep the noise down" was in fact calculated to communicate the opposite; the deployment of the weak weapons of the weak (Scott 1985; Bourdieu 1998) with a view to maintaining the maximum possible social distance. Because of this failure to perform appropriate behaviours of "recognition," the idea of introducing myself as her downstairs neighbour struck me as an absurdly formal gesture.

In her ethnography on Yemeni women *Tournaments of Value* (1996) Meneley observes that the etiquette of greeting another person has "a quality of moral compulsion about it" (1996: 104) so that the withholding of such etiquette is to immediately suspend social relations. Much Middle Eastern ethnography has evidenced that 'greeting practices' and a traditional cultural emphasis upon the etiquette and aesthetics of hospitality are central to the construction of personhood (Konig 1973; Altorki 1986; Biedelman 1989; Myers 1993) so that, to violate or withhold such practices is a calculated insult and denigration of the other person.

Where one's daily experience of neighbour relations is characterised by a perceived lack of hospitality and practices of respectful recognition, neighbours instantiate among themselves a fatalist attitude and discourse towards each other. Cleaning the stairs on a Friday afternoon (22 Jan. 1999) Mrs Davidson from number 53 comes out for a chat and complains immediately "This is a terrible place tae live. A terrible place tae live." Next, the tenant at number 59 comes out and, seeing me busy cleaning the ground floor, we began chatting about the rotas for stair cleaning. She told me:

Ah refuse tae dae it. Ma sister done it aa.  
Cleaned right doon the stairs bit they (i.e.  
tenants on her floor) never bother. See ye've got tae  
make yer mooth go.

Two days later I chat with Yvonne from number 65 who works in the supermarket opposite the flats. Yvonne is a young divorcee and mother of a small boy who also has her tales to tell against the previous tenant at number 57; such as how she had informed the *Department of Social Security* she was working part-time in the supermarket. She tells me she has just been to have a look at her new Council flat in Kirkburn Drive and is hopeful she will be "oot e here in a fortnight." It is clear she feels compelled to leave.

At two o'clock in the morning of March 27th (1999) I got out of my bed to go upstairs to number 57 to complain about the noise. I knocked loudly on the door and heard the music being turned down. I knocked again at the door and hear voices. Because the hall light is on I can see from the movement of shadows I am being "spied on" from the spy-hole but the door remains shut. I knocked again. Eventually a man opens the door. There is the following exchange:

Ego: Is the tenant there?  
Eh. Aye. She's in the bathroom.  
Ego: Could ye tell her Ah want a word?  
Aye.

At this the door half shuts. He looked to his side as if awaiting instructions from someone. Eventually the tenant appeared from behind the door holding it ajar. The conversation was as follows:

Ego: What's wi aa the noise?  
Sharon: What noise?  
Ego: This is the second time the night  
you've woke us aa up.  
Sharon: Ah'm seek e the police comin tae ma  
door every night.

Ego: Ah've never called the police. Not once.

At this she shut the door. I stood back in disbelief and said "What are you playin at? Look open the door. Ah want a word" but the door remained shut. I opened the door a few inches before it was shoved back shut again from the inside. I tried again but with my bare feet I could not get much grip. I went back downstairs.

On the evening of Good Friday (2 April 1999) our neighbour's sister (Murran) came to the door to explain there would be noise that night. Friday nights had turned out to be party night and in a unique effort at acknowledging the likely disturbance to come, she had come to give us "fair warning" while blithely flicking cigarette ash onto my doorstep and the ground floor. In the conversation that took place, complaints regarding noise throughout the night, of having to endure videos of the American sit com *Friends* and its formula of four lines of dialogue then punchline then canned laughter *ad nauseam* until six o'clock in the morning, were denied: "*Naw. Nut. Ma sister disnae dae that. Naw. Nut*". On another occasion late at night I heard this same sister enter the flat upstairs and immediately begin playing loud music. At this the tenant herself asked her sister to turn the music down to which she replied: "*Fuck um. Fuck um.*"

At some point in this "second phase" the problem of noise became personal. On one occasion in the early hours of the morning the music was played at full volume only to be turned down again, only to be turned up again to the maximum until the walls and ceiling visibly vibrated. This behaviour carried on for hours on end. When the police were called, invariably they had to send a car from Glenrothes and, soon after they had spoken to the neighbours, the noise levels would resume. Given such a pattern of behaviour, any denial of the existence of a problem on the part of the neighbour could only inspire an incredulity to any attempts at talking. When one can not "do things with words" one is left with the

silence of an unspoken aggression / antagonism in day-to-day living resulting in "hysterical relations" where the violence of eviction is judged the only remedy even when attempts at suasion are attempted.

### **3.2 The Housed Body & Somatic Reflexivity**

The various relations constituting locals' experience are also operative upon the subjectivity of the ethnographer and must also therefore inform any account of ethnographic reflexivity (*vide* Scheper-Hughes & Lock 1987; Jackson 1989; Stoller 1989; Nast & Pile 1998). To deal concretely with reflexivity then I want to address interpretive strategies appropriate to representing specifically how housing conditions condition "bodily comportment." Trying to communicate the bodily comportment of anti-social neighbours highlights a problem of paradigm as one is forced to attempt a sense of being-there, of living with indeterminacy, *not* via recording verbal discourse whereby the task of interpretation is shared between the ethnographer and informants through interviews and dialogue but, due to the methodological difficulties when the ethnographic context is one of a refusal of dialogue or discourse, the ethnographer is forced to consider such intangibles as "bodily comportment."

When people simply refuse to communicate there can be no question of them being willing informants because they have an interest in hiding from themselves and the ethnographer the truth of what is happening. Clearly representations of aggressively 'anti-social' neighbours who are evicted from their tenancy (while not representative of Cardenden or locals in the sense of forming a numerical majority) must also take into account other fundamental social conditions.

While informants are uninterested in the problems of ethnographic description, I believe their 'silence', their being 'lost for words' and giving up on the effort at verbal representation endorses an ethnographic strategy for moving beyond informant's words to find in an analysis of a

'grammar of silence' (vide Bagguley 1991; Bagguley & Mann 1992) a more penetrating insight into their experience.

Informants have learned *not* to name reality *discursively* because they have learned the fundamental impotence of language; where to say it, to mediate reality in language, is to labour to say nothing new, far less effect change. However, whatever the public face one presents about one's situation, whatever discursive denial an informant may be forced to live due to the demands of maintaining social relations / normality, the body need not become complicit with such strategies. In inverse proportion to the experiential poverty of linguistic representation of reality is the relevance of embodiment, of what is beyond representation, as a site of ethnographic significance.

Questions regarding how the ethnographer communicates what is not meant to be communicated; what by its "nature" is often denied and never forced to an open statement of itself, reflect the challenge of an anthropology *from the body* as an interpretive key for analysing subjective structuration. In this respect, I have found the work of Heidi Nast (1998) on reflexivity and fieldwork helpful in exploring this challenge of developing a theory of reflexivity that takes the body as the privileged place for receiving 'difference'; where '*In effect, bodies are physical field sites upon which the world inscribes itself*' (1998: 95).

The body then is a site of working class structuration (*vide* Mascie-Taylor 1990). Just as I argued in chapter two that without the body there is no way of 'knowing' manual labour, so it is precisely because of an involuntary process of bodily inscription (like the effect of manual work upon the self discussed earlier) that the body can be conceived of as a site for fielding difference and conflict. Hence the salience of the attempt to use the experience of living in a situation of everyday near-violence and confrontation as a:

*Cultural and material context for understanding reflexivity not as a voluntaristic and leisured process of the mirror, initiated and / or controlled by a subject through mental exertion [but] as an embodied process wherein the body is itself a field for registering and negotiating difference.*

(Nast 1998: 107).

Nast's conception of reflexivity, focussing upon the "ways in which places are experienced through the body, and how the body is experienced through places" (1998: 405) can be used as a model for locating significance in the many embodied metaphors used by neighbours in phrases such as:

*Ah'm at the end e ma tether;  
Ma nerves are shot tae hell;  
Ah'm gonnae loss the heid;  
Ah cannae stand any mair e this.  
Ah'm gaun aff ma heid.*

Such expressions "retain the integration of mind / body experience" (Low in Csordas 1994: 145) characteristic of locals' speech and challenge ethnographic representations and accounts of fieldwork reflexivity to do likewise.

### **Marital Habitus**

The reach of structuration does not end with housing conditions. A structural account of reflexivity, because structuration among the working class is *systematic*, must be similarly systematically developed. What further mediates and constitutes the experience of anti-social neighbours and an account of authorial reflexivity then is not only the bare minimum of "being present" but the other mediating influences present that inform one's sociality in a small village which further determine one's "being there". Being present and sharing the difficulties of anti-social neighbours is further mediated and conditioned by the need to include and explicitly acknowledge that one's family is also



implicated in living the reality of anti-social neighbours; one's family heightens the problematic and increases what is "at stake."

In this the ethnographer's conditions of learning further approximates and reproduces the 'embeddedness' of how neighbours experience their experiencing of the problem. These further mediating structures of the problem do not simply add to the problem but transform it into more than simply 'bad neighbours' but a *total fact of living*. The obvious escape from the problem, i.e. moving house, which is the favoured option cited by residents and which we and most neighbours eventually took so as to relieve the strain on family life, is often unavailable to locals until they are re-housed by the Council after many months or years of waiting.

The desire to be re-housed often becomes a necessary aspiration whether it is fulfilled or not, and involves the forced re-conceptualisation of time spent in the flats as "temporary" until something better becomes possible. Locals have developed the practice of accepting a tenancy in a Council flat while simultaneously putting themselves onto the waiting list for a semi-detached cottage or putting an advert in a shop window advertising for a swap. This local wisdom is the strategy for those who do not have the financial resources to buy their own house. If one has sufficient financial resources the problem would normally never arise as, quite literally, one would buy oneself out of the problem and a "full statement" or constitution of the reality of anti-social neighbours would be unlikely to emerge.

As one is forced to abandon the idea of fieldwork as somehow involving only that part of oneself that is "the ethnographer," so one must abandon naive notions of objectivity as there is no compartmentalised identity of being an ethnographer apart from being a husband or father, for example, so that the problem can be compartmentalised into some discrete area of living.

Fundamental to my fieldwork experience and the analysis presented here was being married. Throughout fieldwork I was not simply an anthropologist taking notes on anti-social behaviour but a husband and father with responsibilities which helped mediate unforeseen aspects of locals' structuration. To highlight the body as a site of "fielding difference" (Nast) is also to highlight being married has implications on how the experience of anti-social neighbours is mediated via interpersonal relations.

Because a focus on embodiment problematises evidencing as the body is a private and "sovereign" space, I use the example of Eva and myself to try to make some of the issues involved more concrete. Eva, being "foreign" in terms of class identity, nationality and culture etc. had to face the fact that she had to face being disturbed by neighbours as a matter of routine; had to respond by forming an embodied habitus in relation to the constant disruption and expectation of disruption.

Over time the psycho-somatic reactions developed in response to noise levels or disturbing phenomenon become stable and fixed as part of our own structuration. These reactions become highly charged and determined over time. Reactions to events are not invented afresh on the spot in response to a passing *tracasserie* between neighbours, but are conditioned by a history of reactions and a certain "powerlessness." What is triggered today by today's noisy incident may have taken months or years to construct i.e. a *history* is triggered because a history of responding is gathered and condensed in a psychic-physical 'reaction' already constituted and available and waiting to be triggered. The response is an institutionalisation within subjectivity of a response to helplessness so that when responses to neighbours are so *structured*, there is little freedom to actually respond to the "novelty" of a fresh event as the event simply triggers a highly structured response.

Having a family and being unable to escape this housing reality eventually forced the issue of anti-social neighbours into its full

structuring potential. If I had been single or simply a 'researcher,' I could easily have elided much of the problem during the second phase where the worst of the problem occurred at the weekends, by "researching" in the local pubs. If I had been free to follow this option, perhaps the issues of housing and anti-social neighbours would have merited no more than a footnote or perhaps would only have been present in the form of anecdotes about marginal events that I happened to become aware of.

Just as I have no control over the fact that there exists a certain building specification to the houses and a certain Fife Council housing allocations policy, as a father and husband I can not pick and choose how I am present to the problem. Each of these personal structurations inform the constitution of the problem, so that there is no *one* existential truth to housing conditions or anti-social neighbours; nor is there one correct representation for the ethnographer to grasp as the structurations brought to bear are different for each person. The analytical point then is that structures are themselves mediated by other structures. Being married is not something "in itself"; being committed to a marital habitus affects the experiencing of housing conditions, affects how their structuring effect upon subjectivity is structured.

What is impressive is the reach of social relations. What is impressive is that objective social reality is *determining* of subjectivity so that any attempt to articulate the meaning of eviction must explain how objective social structural considerations can impinge so directly and decisively upon the most personal and intimate details of life; how anti-social neighbours problematise so much of the normally unmarked relationship between self and space, even the immediacy of 'the body' and 'the house,' and how anti-social neighbours structure the most immediate cultural intimacies and constructions of what we often imagine as *personal* space. Hence neighbours' complaints "*Ye cannae relax! Yer hoose is no yer ain*", as normally we *dwell* in our bodies and houses, our selves are 'housed' in our bodies to the extent that when such social and intimate spaces become problematised, it seems nothing can be taken for

granted any longer; that unless one controls one's housing conditions one cannot control one's self or body, but must remain at the mercy of relations.

In tandem with an interiorization of housing / social relations there was a professionalisation or bureaucratisation of the problem by the various statutory bodies involved. Especially during the second stage, where no formal complaint was made to the Council, and as the Council never enquired as to our views of the new tenant, it seemed as if the bodily encoding and somatic registration of the problem by those involved became its only available level of existence; as if the only social space available to the problem was the "private body" as the other agencies involved disappeared it into a legal or social work or bureaucratic world of professional discourse. There occurs then a "splitting of subjectivity from objectivity" (Taussig 1992: 96) where the person is reduced to the legal and contractual status of "tenant" in the name of bureaucratically defined objectivity.

When objectivity is systematically "privatised" or "somatised" i.e. rendered subjective, how does the body receive and express the meaning of events and relations? In the case of one neighbour, her 'somatisation' of social conditions were medicalised in the form of an addiction to prozac. Eva's answer came in dramatic form overnight when she developed spots that covered the length and breadth of her back and shoulders. What struck me about the sudden emergence of dozens of little pink and yellow spots was their uniformity; as if their perfectly equal spacing expressed a mathematical formula; a remarkable antepredicative somatic encoding or speech act "fielding difference" (Nast) in protest at unbearable living conditions.

The central complaint of noise during the night has the obvious bodily significance of being deprived of one's normal sense of embodied self through lack of sleep. This in itself is productive of an embodied critique and construction of difference and intense animosity. Daily life took on

the form of a contest due to the fact of sharing the same housing space; the shared housing space was the site of the production of a bodily habitus that neighbours *resisted* happening within themselves by escalating the dispute to extremes by initiating the process of eviction in an effort to reclaim their homes and shared social spaces.

A daily sense of a lack of agency and powerless leads to fatalism. Frustration among neighbours seemed as much to do with having reached a multi-faceted and multi-structural impasse *vis-a-vis* the objective conditions they inhabit as with the problem tenant herself. Informants are well aware of the deep-seated nature of the problems and issues raised by anti-social behaviour, and the parallel decline in public space that are a feature of other former mining villages and towns coping with the change from being central to the industrial base to their present marginal position within the economy. But awareness of the structural nature of their problems, reading the local newspapers they conclude "it's the same everywhere," does not alleviate an existential problem or prevent neighbours calling problem neighbours 'scum', 'parasites' or calling for eviction.

When interviewing locals on their views of the creation of the parliament after July 1999, residents would inform me of tenants who had "done a moonlight" so as to warn me I could expect no reply when knocking on a particular door. On more than one occasion I was told within more than one particular street that there has been several such moonlight flits recently. A local *Housing Studies* student James, whom I interviewed (17th December 1998) for his overview on housing issues, made it clear that eviction is a policy of *displacement* as opposed to resolution:

*There's letters in the press every week aboot Lochgelly.<sup>2</sup> They're sayin Lochgelly wis a dumpin grund fir bad tenants. Aa the anti- social tenants are gettin dumped in Lochgelly. An that*

---

<sup>2</sup> A neighbouring village.



wis happenin in Cardenden fir a while as well.  
Craigside Road. That wis a dumpin ground.

Is that just myth or was that true?

Well there was elements e truth in it. Cause it  
is happenin, aye. Ah used tae say...this wis  
afore Ah got interested in this line e work,  
when the Cooncil first started daen aa the  
hooses up, Ah used tae say aye it's no the  
hooses they want tae regenerate it's the  
tenants they're wantin tae regenerate. Because  
they've got aa these braw hooses an then ken  
two weeks later some e they hooses are jist as  
bad. Broken windaes an ken? Three-piece suit  
lyin in the front garden ken. So Ah think the  
problem has always been there, it's jist gettin  
worse.

Where did the Bells come from? Is this another example of bad  
tenants coming from Kinglassie?<sup>3</sup>

Well seemingly aye. He's been evicted, or the  
family's been evicted fae somewhere in  
Kinglessie. Bit Ah'm no sure if the problem's  
jist movin roond aboot, bein displaced, or if  
it's growin aye. Ah'm no sure. Bit Ah ken  
Cardenden's no the worse place Ah can tell ye  
that...Also Ah'm no sure how much the drug  
problem's at fault.

Affirming a basic structuralist insight informants complain it is the fact  
of *sharing* the same space, often due to a lack of sound proofing, as  
opposed to the person or lifestyle of a particular neighbour, that is the  
problem. Neighbours are largely indifferent to what others do in their  
own private life *so long as it remains private*. It is the fact of being  
subjected to, having no control over *hearing* noise and loud music, for  
example, that constitutes the problem; it is the fact of sharing / hearing  
that makes indifference impossible and sets the scene for the emergence  
and contestation of *difference*, and the rationale behind the strategy of  
seeking eviction.

Eviction involves a series of everyday experiences of dislocation for those  
neighbours involved and is not simply the dramatic event of furniture  
and plastic bags scattered along a street, a day of defiant gestures, police

---

<sup>3</sup> A neighbouring village.



and council officials. The event is what it is because of what has gone before. Integral to the event is the history of the deliberate daily exclusion learned and practised by neighbours culminating in action taken by the state and judiciary. There are degrees of eviction: the daily eviction from normal conversation and neighbourly friendliness as a strategy employed to negate a sense of belonging to a particular tenant, and to foster a group identity among the other tenants.

### **3.3 The Production of Hysterical Relations**

This concentration on particular anti-social neighbours would be very unrepresentative and “unfair”, were it not for the fact that they share deep cultural continuities with much more quotidian behaviours observable on a daily basis in Cardenden, so that “anti-social” behaviour can become quite banal and unremarkable.

Because the kitchens in the Council flats are too small to fit a table, every morning we took breakfast in the living room beside the window. From here we looked out onto an enclosed grassed area for the use of the tenants of the three blocks of flats. While we soon noted that we never saw any other household at table, something we did see every morning was a tenant from the next block who let her Alsatian dog out for exercise onto the common green. Every morning we would watch her leaning against the same clothes pole while the dog exercised for as long as it took its owner to smoke her cigarette. Every morning the dog would defecate somewhere in this small grassed area, as if confirming on a daily basis a point made by Wilma Beattie (4 Orebank Road, 14th November 1999):

*Young folk'll sit in a beautifully decorated living room and they'll no clean up their litter outside, young folk. They'll withdraw intae their ain wee bit and they'll no interact wi other people.*

Soon after we moved from Cardenden Road to Station Road our new neighbour, Marlene, an unemployed single mother of two daughters with two Labrador dogs, would similarly let the dogs out every morning to defecate wherever they could find space, despite the fact that a large public park was less than fifty yards away. Marlene moved in next door to us in July 2000 and moved out in February 2001 because the *Department of Social Security* refused to pay the rent her private landlord required. Upon leaving, she left behind dozens of black plastic bags full of rubbish at the foot of the common stairs which the landlord, who lives in a very large bungalow in Cardenden Road, never took responsibility for clearing, so that they were still there when we left Station Road six months later.

On one occasion, soon after having moved in beside us, Marlene's two dogs were tied to the railings at the foot of our common stairs while Marlene was nearby. Walking down the stairs with my two-year-old daughter, I asked Marlene if she could keep the dogs to one side for a moment as Candela was afraid of the dogs. I could feel her body tense in fear as she gripped my neck and buried her face into my chest as we descended closer towards the dogs. To this request Marlene replied: "She'll just have to get used to it."

Such open lack of civility I came to expect from Marlene who seemed to exhibit a basic estrangement from codes of sociality; as if she had given up the pretence at performing basic codes of civility and was committed to living a private form of hysteria (*vide* Bradshaw & Holmes 1989) due to the exigencies of having to raise two daughters on her own; one of whom was mentally handicapped. What struck me was that to represent such behaviour as lacking civility is to imply an inaccurate level of agency, as such behaviour had the quality of an absence of deliberative consciousness, so that to describe it as "uncivil" or "rude" would be to take it too personally by implying I was the object of an intentional act.

Observing such behaviour on a day-to-day basis makes the distinctions between the subjective and objective thoroughly unreal because such behaviour is so evidently determined by objective restraints so that, whatever "personal" dispositions such individuals do exhibit, can scarcely be accurately described as personal as they are so clearly "submissions to necessity" (Bourdieu 1984: 376). It is ironic that what becomes distinctive about a particular individual is the degree to which such submission has reached. Such behaviour was not that of the wilful behaviour evidenced by the anti-social behaviour of phase two; rather, her behaviour seemed to derive from an internalisation beyond the ability of writing to capture so that one is left to elicit this level of highly socialised "pre-sociality" via anecdote (*vide* Gans 1970).

I recall on one occasion while attempting to talk to the first problem tenant at number 57 about noise, she simply did not seem able to respond; that she had actually shrugged her shoulders, lifted her two hands in the air to communicate she had had enough and was giving in, and thereupon about-turned and left me standing holding the door ajar. After this I never again attempted to complain as I felt in this incident I had seen a depth of domination I could never make appeal to.

On Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2000, playing cards in the local pub *The Auld Man's Shelter*, I got chatting with a young local unemployed man. He is over thirty years old and has two young children by his ex-wife. He is on his second partner by whom he also has children. He sees his first two children each Sunday when his ex-wife drops them off for the day at his mother's house. Local knowledge informs me he has not worked "in years" as the *Child Support Agency* would make him contribute to the upkeep of his children. During the course of our conversation he informed me he leaves the vacuum cleaner on in his flat "sometimes for an hour just to annoy the old woman downstairs."

Living in a village has the disadvantages of an enforced intimacy that can feel like an imprisonment because of an inability to access different

'structural cues' that allows one to assume a different persona, and so offset constructing the self solely by reference to the same particular realities. Having to share the same social space with a problem tenant, having to do one's shopping in the same shops, always being likely to pass each other on the street, having to anticipate and be ready to face the problem whenever outside, is experienced as psychologically stressful. In such a situation examples of what I am calling "hysterical relations" are perhaps inevitable. An article in the local *Fife Free Press* newspaper under the headline "*Pulled Air Pistol On Youth*" described the following incident:

*A Cardenden man tortured by noisy youngsters flipped after one youth threw a snowball at him, a court heard this week. Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court was told how John Campbell (51) then collected an air pistol from his home and threatened to shoot one of his tormentors. Campbell, 22 Whitehall Avenue, admitted that on December 6 he assaulted a 15-year-old boy, repeatedly presented an air pistol at his head and threatened to shoot him.*

Mr Campbell was evicted by Fife Council officials who put his belongings onto the pavement outside his home and wrote on the front door:

*"Evicted September 2000."* Locals in the street advised the problem stemmed from a family who had already been evicted from a neighbouring village and who had been moved into the street by the Council. From this date, neighbour relations took a turn for the worst. Not only was there antagonism towards the new family but there also began trouble among erstwhile peaceable neighbours. Feuds between neighbours and extended families began and ended in violence and hospitalisation. During my interview with James he mentioned this particular neighbour dispute problem in Whitehall Avenue and Mr Campbell's brush with the law as described above. Having reviewed the incident he advised ominously: *"somethin's gonnae happen."*

What I found significant about this comment was that it was said as a conclusion to a story where something by any standards had already happened. It gives an insight into working class consciousness and raises the question as to what the local definition of an event or happening could be when assault with a shotgun does not automatically qualify as "something." When such incidents are reduced to normality, can *history* ever emerge to compete with perception so enthralled to social structuration?<sup>4</sup>

Some months prior my interview with James, I interviewed a committee member of a *Neighbourhood Watch* scheme which had been formed specifically to deal with the "problem family" who had arrived in Whitehall Avenue. She warned, prophetically as it turned out, of the likelihood of the above incident:

*They started hasslin Keith Campbell. Noo they were oan dangerous grund there...cause if they git um wi a pint Ah mean he'll kill them ken what Ah mean? They were hasslin him fir a while. Mona<sup>5</sup> says she wis feart tae gane oot the door!...or tae say onyhin. Noo that's...so we says we're stoppin it ye ken?*

Asking James to comment on the effectiveness of various Fife Council initiatives to deal with the social context of public sector housing he advised:

*Whether they make any difference or no Ah don't know because it's...it's a trend. It's a trend fir aa these young folk. Tae be rajes. There's mair an mair e thum showin up aa the time...Take Whitehall Avenue for example. Noo Whitehall Avenue's always been a dead quiet place. An that guy Ricky Bell...that family's moved in. And noo the police are up there two*

---

<sup>4</sup> On a Saturday morning in April (1999) shopping in Kirkcaldy high street, some days after news reports of the murder in America of high school pupils by disaffected pupils, I am standing outside *Ottakers Bookshop* waiting for Eva who is inside. Paying attention to the window display of various drawings from pupils at Collydean primary school in Glenrothes, I notice one in particular by Scot Clunie which was accompanied by the caption: "No One is Born Evil".

<sup>5</sup> A next door neighbour of Mr Campbell.



or three times every week. This is happenin aa  
o'er.<sup>6</sup>

Much of the material I have gathered from observing and talking to people could easily be portrayed as a farcical daily fare of contumacy regarding the most basic acts of sociality; where anti-social neighbours seem to be involved in the cultivation, pursuit even, of their own helplessness and where a lack of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1977; 1991) is deployed as a weapon against those whom they judge to be contesting their behaviour. As Charlesworth has written of a younger generation of the south Yorkshire working class: "...their existence seems to take place on the brink of nonsense" (2000: 293).

Absurd behaviours such as taking dogs to an eight inch strip of grass and training them to defecate there as opposed to acres of open grass a few yards away until a communal 'garden' space is saturated in dog dirt, is common practice. Such behaviours require first of all the absence of relationships to neighbours; one's neighbour must firstly "disappear" in order for such behaviours to appear normal. This then is the general context from which emerges particular cases of eviction and problem neighbours. Often it is a question of degree as opposed to kind.

In *The Gift* (1950) Mauss argues the practice of exchange is to implicate people into a system of reciprocity so as to constitute and reproduce sociality. The purpose then of withholding the "gift" is to abort a system of reciprocity and obligation so as to avoid the exigencies of sociality. This denial of giving extends even to denying one's neighbour the gift of speech, of conversation and simple chatting calculated to produce ignorance of one's neighbour and thereby license in one's behaviour.

In some this trait has become systematic where such a strategy of denial and failure of representation of self becomes a form of agency so as to legitimise the process of how anti-social selves naturalise their

---

<sup>6</sup> This family was subsequently re-housed out of the village by Fife Council.



behaviour. Any attempt to explicate this analytically is to invite denial as it would be to implicate them into the intentional agency of ill-will and therefore of responsibility and accountability; something that must not be allowed to emerge because the point is to not know the other person i.e. to make the neighbour “disappear.”

The resultant infantile “magical consciousness” allows the transformation of anti-social behaviour into ‘normality’ as it disappears an Other / Neighbour who stands as a contradiction. To truly see the Other / Neighbour is to admit them into one's self-construct; is to see the self in relation to others and, in a consciousness and self-identity ruled by the fiction of immediacy, this can only “pollute” such immediacy. These fictions are pursued in order to reproduce these selves and these coping strategies which require an agreed upon fiction of ignorance of neighbours and the pretence of ignorance as to the consequences of particular behaviours.

When trying to imaginatively enter into the mind of such “anti-social” tenants, it seems that when asked to turn the music down, this simple request falls like an arbitrary and unjustifiable command; a naked will to power by some Other and, in true post-sixties existential style, justifies their rebellion as if at stake is a “project” of authenticity. The end result is that their “internment in necessity” becomes complete insofar as it becomes a form of agency; of asserting and defending self-identity.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Both Baudrillard in his *The Mirror of Production* (1975) and Lyotard in his *Libidinal Economy* (1993) identify the fact that the working class have imprisoned themselves into the realm (or “mirror”) of industrial production and, by defending their right to work for example, effectively defend their right to be exploited so that the theorist can no longer look to the proletariat as a source of social critique. This brief contact with a real (as opposed to a theoretical) working class, while signalling a crisis in Marxist ideology should also signal an insight into the nature and reach of social reality into human subjectivity. While Baudrillard subsequently rejects the Marxist thesis that the workers’ “real self” is alienated and must be re-taken at the term of a struggle, and Lyotard similarly rejects the idea of the working class suffering a Heideggerian “forgetfulness of being,” this promising genuflection to Maurice Blondel’s insistence that there are only real integrated selves nowhere in Baudrillard or Lyotard produces the ethnographic turn to the proletarian subject. The structural determination or interpolation of the proletariat (the only basis upon which a critique of society could ever be based) is never systematically investigated. This ethnographic refusal to my mind is the basis upon which their post-structuralist positions rest.

When intentionality is characterised by such immediacy there is little effort made to construct a future, and having no future is a powerful incentive to living in the moment; to the construction of a hegemonic immediacy geared to "stimulus and response" behaviour uncontrolled by meaning or the "alienation" felt in attempts at conceptual self-representation. The future is not cognised or made to feature as part of one's horizon, and the resultant poverty of ambition ensures the hegemony of structure over the possibility of history or the Other emerging from such subjects' structuration. As mentioned, this "eviction of representation" is not one-way traffic. In my dealings with neighbours there was a marked refusal even to call the problem neighbour by name, as if avoiding a 'semantic clash'; a form of linguistic eviction from the intimacy of language among neighbours to achieve distance in spite of the fact of spatial intimacy.

Conditions of close proximity lead to neighbours' reification of the problem into the "neighbour from hell." Intimacy in housing conditions forces an "othering" or a reification in thinking *vis-a-vis* the Other / neighbour, where neighbours are reduced to damning short-hand narrative diagnoses such as: "*She's rough as fuck. The hale family's rough as fuck.*" "Giving up" on the other is in fact a profound grasp of the impossibility of another's agency for the foreseeable future; is a rational judgement which produces fatalism or resignation because no other agency can do the work that a particular neighbour or individual must do. Such an individual can only be evicted.

Only then is seeable the paradox that in giving up on one's neighbour as capable of agency, one is analogously reproducing and sharing in their own 'history of response'; their own history of having given up on the attempt at social life. In making reified / essentialised judgements on others, one is becoming more alike and until one does likewise, one will remain a stranger to the reach of working class structuration.

To talk of everyday life in Cardenden one must talk of those individuals frustrated at not being free of circumstances, of the drudgery of a daily battle with the same circumstances continually present and problematic to them (*vide* Bradshaw & Holmes 1989). Such individuals appear to be continually under pressure which a simple circumstance or event will reveal; as if their condition is being perennially at an incident's remove from reproducing their dominated behaviour in social space, and thereby confirming in the eyes of their habitual observers their being determined. So habituated are they to being constituted by the merest gaze that should one tarry too long with one's eyes in their direction, "something will happen."

The incredible fact of never having spoken about the problem with both tenants is dissolved into the day-to-day routine of post-verbal normality. A refusal of relatedness, leaving only the bare minimal relatedness of physical proximity, is productive of a wider ethos of mere endurance of others which clearly impoverishes the experience of social life and locality, and helps create the paradox of how the absence of social relations can have the reality of presence.

I argue that being habitually and expertly reduced to an appendage of "structure" or structural relations, with the problems involved never being able to be addressed "in themselves," and given their vociferous and unprecedented habitation of social space as a matter of "authenticity" and right (as evidenced by unprecedented verbal aggression), this also evidences an emergent sense of subjectivity that participates in a general cultural logic "released" since the sixties from many of the traditional social mores of authority and respectability; a subjectivity unapologetic and jealous of its rights to social space, however objectively subordinate in terms of class structure such presence in fact is.

And with such a subjectivity expert in a *habitus* of subordination, from such glimpses of "unapologetic being," I argue if such subjectivity

apprehended itself politically as subject to structural and cultural under-representation or mis-representation, it would be judged intolerable, and in this it exhibits and participates in the cultural logic of an emergent working class nationalism. When we factor into the equation the decline of British national identity, which I argue has occurred in the '79 generation, then coupled with the diagnostic events of 1979 - 1997, working class nationalism becomes "inevitable."

Before grasping this deep cultural logic however my initial attitude to much of my data was one of mild panic. I felt I was always trying to rescue my data from absurdity; as if my data was always descending to new levels of trivia and I faced what felt like the minutiae of everyday post-industrial dystopia and was condemned to write the ethnographic equivalent of "*teachin young folk how tae use a knife an fork an that ye ken*"<sup>8</sup> because, as yet, this "culture" was unable to reproduce a basic level of commensality among its children who were therefore in need of attending state-sponsored courses to learn how to eat food properly.

### Commensality

On February 24th 2000, a news item on *Reporting Scotland's* evening news bulletin reported the findings of a doctor working at Yorkhill hospital in Glasgow, where one in five children admitted to the hospital were diagnosed as "clinically malnourished." The concept of a domestic habitus includes habits of commensality and nurturing practices. Though not a matter of direct observation, I posit that for many locals even in their "cuisine" is reproduced their domination whereby commensality as a "substantive something," is only witnessed as a spectacle by the imported consumption of cookery programmes on television featuring those bourgeois individuals capable of such cultural distinction (*vide* Charles & Kerr 1985, 1988).

---

<sup>8</sup> This quote is from a mother describing what her son's work at a local government sponsored homeless project amounted to.

I recall an informant telling me an anecdote concerning his common law wife in her mid-forties (and mother of two grown daughters). While preparing food she had complained to him that the recipe she was following required a litre of water. In exasperation she had complained aloud how was she supposed to know how much a litre was. I reproduce the dialogue as it was related to me:

I: How much is a litre?  
D: Jist use that plastic jug.  
I: How dae ye mean like?  
D: The jug! That'll tell ye.  
I: How like?  
D: It's got it on the side!  
I: What are ye talking about?  
D: See they marks on the side e the jug?  
It tells ye aa the different measurements.  
I: Oh right! Is that what they're fir? Ah  
never kent that.

A general absence of positive / prescriptive cultural mores regarding food was a constant theme of Eva's observations throughout fieldwork. Eva's critique was never voiced in terms of the increasing penetration of all aspects of life by consumer capitalism, nor of the apparent inability of working class people to resist this co-option. It was simply casually remarked upon as another mediating point of her general judgement as to the lack of "culture" among the working class.

Evidence of the new socialisation role being appropriated by the state in place of the family was mentioned when my housing studies student informant (James) characterised the problem of bad tenants thus:

*Some e them are total rajes. Fife Coouncil have a scheme, Springboard Housing Project, where they assist young people in what they call independent living. They gie them a tenancy an they show them how tae keep it. They teach them how tae look efter their hoose. How tae look efter their tenancy. That's their joab. Jist show them how tae budget, how tae cook, how tae*



clean, how tae run a house. That's their joab...That wis set up in response tae the fact in the Templehall area<sup>9</sup> there wis a lot e young people gettin tenancies an abandonin it. Cause they didnae ken how tae look efter it. They were up tae here in arrears, rent arrears. Their hoose wis a doss house, there were people in it aa the time that they didnae ken. How tae look after their hoose. This wis set up in response tae that.

As well as working in a unit for young homeless people in Kirkcaldy who require emergency accommodation<sup>10</sup>, as a Housing Studies student, I asked James to give me an overview of the main issues in managing the housing stock in Cardenden:

It's come doon tae the legislation on home ownership cause anybody that's in a decent hoose has bought their hoose. An aa that's left is aa the shite hooses an the people that cannae afford tae buy them. That's why it's now called Social Housing, because it's only the people that are on benefits that are in. It's what ye call "residual housing". That's aa that's left an it's usually aa the crap in hard tae let areas. If aabody in Cluny Park, Whitehall Avenue, Carden Castle Park<sup>11</sup> have bought their hoose and they flats [in Cardenden Road] is aa that's left, aa the dregs are gonnae go there...aa the dregs e society is gonnae git pit in the flats...if that's the only Coouncil hooses left. That's probably the wrang term tae use bit ye ken what Ah mean. There's a big issue in housing at the moment in that they're wantin it tae take oan a more social role because it's aa poor people that they are basically dealin wi...They're wanting it...it's now integrated wi social work, housin and social work's the same, the same department, because its aa the poor people that's rentin...so they've integrated wi social work. That's why Ah'm daen a degree in

---

<sup>9</sup> In Kirkcaldy.

<sup>10</sup> James could only remember three men from Cardenden who had been referred to the homeless unit. One had been put out of his house for "drinkin"; another for "interferin wi bairns" and another for "bein wild".

<sup>11</sup> Local street names.



*housin...because they're tryin tae make it a professional [qualification].*

Locals use the rhetorical phrase "*What's that like when it's at hame?*" to establish the "real" meaning of something. The metaphor of home implies that in the domestic sphere things are what they are; the home is where people remove social masks to reveal their real selves. What is relentlessly revealed as "real" when living amongst anti-social neighbours is that the self is not indifferent ever, that the self is no *in itself* island, and this applies especially in the *home* where this myth is most cherished because, as Jean-Klein has noted, "Traditionally, 'the house' has represented a sovereign space in its own right" (2001: 115n). The lack of control that one is accustomed to and which one secedes as a given in any negotiation with the social world is easily resented when it becomes 'extorted' in the intimacy of self and home. Whether we are aware of it or not, we are always living out and committed to an experience and expectation of society, so that in adverse circumstances, one begins to resent this fundamental condition of *relatedness*. The process of eviction reveals how much we are committed to a normally unstated theory of *correct dwelling* and a basic civility which is naturalised to the extent that a theory of *correct dwelling* is superfluous, as the assumption is that to dwell at all is to dwell "correctly."

When structural conditions such as housing conditions affect oneself negatively, the dream of a detached bungalow "away oot the road" (as one informant put it) becomes psychologically real because of its promise of putting an end to a life at the mercy of relations. However, as James stated, given that it is increasingly unlikely a Council flat tenant would have such resources today given the majority of sitting Council tenants throughout the late eighties and nineties bought their council houses at discount prices, the experiencing of the problem of anti-social neighbours becomes more acute as it is a constant reminder of the fact

that one does not have the resources available to move; that one is dependent upon others to behave well in order to live well.

A problem with bad neighbours then is a constant mediation of other structurations residents are defined by, so that a tenant's (relative) inability to overcome the behaviour of others mediates the extent of how powerless one is to solve the most basic problems of one's immediate social and intimate environment. Endless laments about the many 'petty behaviours' for many take on the function of reminding them themselves just how little they are in control of their lives and so are avoided. This raises issues regarding the existential grounding of the apparent lack of direct action by the residents to solve their problems. I was struck by how the residents seemed to complain endlessly in proportion to their passivity. Organising a rent strike, for example, seemed impossible given a lack of financial resources meant many did not pay rent and therefore were not in a position to threaten to withdraw their rent of £160 a month.

Having argued that both the “worked self” (chapter two) and the house are everyday sites of “sovereignty,” I posit the following tripartite analogy or continuity between the personal and the political:

1. as tenants, they do not have the financial capital to exert the agency of a rent strike in protest against anti-social neighbours.
2. as a class, they do not have the capital to afford the agency of socialism in protest against capitalism.
3. as a people or nation, they lack the capital to exert the agency of independence in protest against 18 years of an unelected “English” Conservative government.

### 3.4 Structure and Self

If the real is relational, what are the implications of a structuralist approach to identity and personality? Certainly in a context of fraught relations where one's environment is characterised by a refusal of dialogue, one cannot convincingly constitute oneself as a neighbour. Much like the verbal denial of the significance of "menial work" for the self of the worker who performs such work, so tenants in Council flats often, at least rhetorically, attempt to elide what Crapanzano terms "*a failure in the self-constituting process*" (1992: 100) due to an inability to institute what he terms "*the dialogic self*."

Being a "good neighbour" is a fundamental and necessary status to being considered an adult and competent human being. In a situation therefore where it is deemed necessary for the law to intervene and declare someone unfit to be housed, other declarations of failure (as a parent for example) are present. While I was in no position to know the families of problem neighbours to gain insight into socialisation patterns in such families, subsequent to the eviction of Fiona Reid from 104 Cardenden Road (August 10th 1998), she would arrive with her two children at eight a.m. to 57 Cardenden Road i.e. directly above our flat, so that I could see on a daily basis something of the lives of such children. What little I did see of such "nurturing relationships" were often so brutal that even this phrasing of the phenomenon has an irremediably euphemised ring to it. What is certain is that just as it is necessary to view the distinction between public and private as naïve, so we must concede the impossibility of constituting a discrete realm of "nurturing practices" that can delay among such children the "*inexorable verdicts of the real*" (Bourdieu 2001: 77).

Young mothers often struggling alone in the absence of any fathers or meaningful employment; mothers often expressing anger, shouting and swearing aggressively towards and in the company of very young children is normal. Even emotions become dominated by the pressure of

responding to structures. Individuals are angry not because of some essential "something" inside, but because of the countless and continual number of ways their negotiating their way through social spaces, in the many decisions about food, where to shop, having to keep children in check etc., does not allow them to escape their economic and cultural subordination.

Sitting in the café in Station Road watching a woman and her children, a sudden movement by the mother with her hand across the table has one child instinctively jerking his head out of reach. The mother looks incredulous at his automatic response of flight from being hit, despite the fact that the movement was to catch a bottle of milk being spilt. Being somewhat embarrassed, the mother began to ask "What are ye...?" but the same bodily habitus of the child meant he had just as quickly relaxed again, without his first action having to be thought about; even his second action of relaxing, realising it was a "false alarm", was just as automatically performed and forgotten without thinking as with the first reaction.

Witnessing the interaction of children and their adult guardians on the streets often resembled spectating a struggle between contesting "immediacies." However, while the child has every right to his or her immediacy as it is natural, the adults' immediacy is "fake" in comparison because it is a learned concession to social structuration forced to compete with the "real thing." In this "contest," such adults are faced with an immediacy deeper and more immediate than their own. This confrontation with the innocent immediacy of the child is a structural opportunity to deconstruct prior learned behaviours, but this does not happen to the extent that structure defeats the possibility of a new sociality or agency or new identity. Children then are often not spared their parents' problems and tensions and often there is no attempt at "impression management" or public presentation of self, as children do not constitute a category deserving of a different set of behaviours and relationships.

Because being a mother or father is a social and cultural construct as opposed to a biological universal, such an identity may be withheld. In the eyes of locals, being declared unfit to be housed is to be declared unfit to be a mother. Because, especially in a small village setting, we relentlessly encounter the world in terms of how others encounter us, problem tenants who were evicted have little resources (financial, symbolic or familial) to *credibly* combat, not least in their own estimation, wider social definitions of themselves. Hence I ask of the developmental potential of their concepts of themselves as *mothers*; whether they in fact constitute and therefore integrated such an identity within themselves. If the reach of structuring pressures means we argue for the end of the separation of the public and private realm, and concede the impossibility of maintaining a discrete realm of nurturing practices for example, are the necessary psychological and cultural resources required to constitute substantive self-concepts such as "mother" or "father" similarly absent? Because such identities are each accompanied by an ideology and practice of love, and because these intimate realities also stand revealed as subject to interpolating structural pressures (*vide* Dennis & Erdos 1993) must such subjects also remain at a particular stage of development?

Because of the hegemonic "role of feelings in indexing the true self" (Lutz 1988: 7) and because "The role of culture in the experience of emotion is seen as secondary, even minimal" (*ibid.*: 3), defending one's own objective determination can take on the illusory appearance of defending one's true self. I ask then if the profound fatalism or profound self-defensive acceptance of objective life-chances on view is the refusal to cultivate any plurality of identities within themselves as a means to prevent any consequential obedience to new and "higher" demands and new and "higher" behaviours; whether by refusing this development of self they thereby maintain an immediacy because they are thereby freed of having to deal with competing roles and identities. If no "difference" is allowed to develop inside, having aborted this developmental potential within themselves, any subsequent abortion



of sociality or psyche demanded via the exigencies of sociality and relationships with neighbours or spouses or children or even self, subsequent to such primary socialisation of self, will come to have the feel of authentic agency.

When the reach of structural pressures reaches to the extent of problematising the ability to constitute "normal" psychological development, it is clear there are strong structural pressures acting against the possibility of developing a post-structural reflexive project in any serious fashion. In this regard, despite the controversy over structuralist writers such as Foucault, Levi-Strauss, Barthes and Althusser and their championing the "end of the subject," it is easy to argue that this has long since occurred within working class subjectivity in the great transformation to modern industrial society.

In contrast to Levi-Strauss's structuralism which locates structure in the unconscious human mind (*vide* Benton 1984), by structuralist I mean those present relations such as housing conditions or the wage-capital relation (*vide* chapter 2) and their many cumulative consequences, especially when living in what today is increasingly a market *culture* as well as a market economy; where money is more and more the measure of more and more relations given the penetrations of capitalism into all aspects of our lives. Because working class structuration implies a radical synchronic prejudice, a consequence is the inability to resist regimes of fashion as they lack the cultural and financial wherewithal to withstand the dictates of capitalist modernity. There is then an "internment in the present."

Talking about my experiences of anti-social neighbours with locals, an appreciation of the structural reasons behind why social maturity has become problematic is clearly stated. As the holding of a tenancy marks a transition to independent and adult living, so the inability to keep a tenancy implies less than adult status. As one retired neighbour



complained commenting on the day of the eviction of Fiona Reid in August 1998 from Cardenden Road:

*Bit ye see this is jist...see at sixteen year auld we were oot workin at fifteen year auld...bit noo they're runnin aboot like bairns, ken what Ah mean! Sixteen year auld we'd been oot workin fir a year...an noo sixteen year auld they're runnin aboot cryin folk poofs<sup>12</sup>...ken what Ah mean it's...the mentalities jist no there...it's no there!*

Enquiring about the background of the young people who are in the homeless unit James worked in in Kirkcaldy he replied:

*A lot e them come fae broken, Ah'd say the majority e then come fae broken homes. An they're stayin wi their mum or step faither or the ither way aboot an they cannae deal wi it.*

Asking why these services were never required before he replied: "Well, that was when we had a family structure." Informants then explicitly refer to the breakdown in families, to young single unemployed locals being given flats or cottages, the absence of fathers and young people lacking financial or employment resources, as well as what they perceive to be the Council's policy of preferential treatment to housing unemployed single mothers, as causal factors in the perceived rise in anti-social behaviour. After highlighting the lack of work available and the change in family structure, informants feel there is nothing more to be said. Interviewing a committee member of a *Neighbourhood Watch* scheme on the day of an eviction from 104 Cardenden Road, I began by expressing surprise as at that point I had never heard of anyone being evicted in Cardenden.

*Evicted today! At the bus stop, the double block. Ricky Bell, up Whitehall Avenue has got a key supposedly to the house. She's got two laddies. Young one's going in and out. Ah saw*

---

<sup>12</sup> Slang for homosexuals.

the bags. She's away tae a homeless place. She come fae Lochgelly. They all got a petition signed. Saw their councillor an got a lawyer. Forced the Cooncil tae dae somethin. Ah dinnae believe in this silence crap. These Van Beck's'll be next. That Sarah pits her music oan. See they're all oot e crap hames. Bit if ye jist sit an say nuthin they'll take o'er the place...One e the Van Beck's son in laws<sup>13</sup> gave that Ricky Bell a doin. He got taen away in an ambulance but the next day he was back. Thought he had broken ribs bit the next day he wis pinchin wheel trims. See at sixteen we were at work. Nae wonder everybody wants their ain wee bungalow. Away somewhere. Peace an quiet. See the Council's got a lot tae answer for. The lassies are the worst. The Cooncil's gien them aa hooses. ... Next door tae Wullie Doig. Accordin tae Ena they were dancin naked oot the back. The RSPCA wis doon there fir the dug. Ye cannae take it tae a homeless shelter. See these folk cost the poll tax. Aye, they're a burden tae society. See they've nae faithers. Nae work. Cause it's ay been a decent area...why let the thugs take over...an it's aa these wee yins ye ken, Ah mean they're startin young nooadays... jist a continual gaun oot an in yer girden, aa the time Ah mean ye ken. Ah mean tae hell wi that...their ain girdens are like middens...you're workin tryin tae keep yer place braw...an they're gonnae...ye ken? ...och Ah mean when you were young it wis jist mischief...ye'd go in girdens ye'd steal vegetables or what...aa'bdies done that bit wi thame they're wicked...some e thum noo.

Echoing the above points regarding work, James said:

Young people are no mixin wi adults any mair...at work. They're aa on these trainin schemes.

The fundamental role of work in the socialisation of young people into normal adult life is a clear theme among many informants I spoke to. I have already highlighted the fact that within Cardenden today there is a

---

<sup>13</sup> This is fact was not the family responsible.

generation who experience a clear separation of work and locality. While this separation applies to the majority of the local working population, many have had a long primary experience of the two being tied together. Traditionally, it has been the function of work to socialise young adults into their place within adult society. This had many beneficial consequences such as establishing 'psychological continuity' (Mauss) between fathers and sons and mothers and daughters across the generations. Loss of work then involves a loss of social ties with wider society fuelling discussions of the formation of an underclass in de-industrialised areas. It is because of a prior dominating hegemony of the world of work and the existence of a shared public ideological realm, and their parallel disappearance since the nineteen fifties / sixties, that explains the current perception and emergence of decline in working class community, solidarity and tradition; as if so many are a job away from the structuration, traditions and selves of their parents' generation, and so are particularly vulnerable to being made "traditionless."

As part of the on-going enquiry into working class structuration this chapter began by describing how housing conditions impact on locals' structuration. I have attempted to articulate the *process* and cultural and structural logic of this structuration i.e. how it happens, and argued that such structuration is not only compatible with the exercise of agency but *rational* agency. This chapter would never have been written but for bad sound proofing in Council flats. It is not about making judgements on the lifestyles of others; it is about what happens when conflicting lifestyles are brought *in relation to each other* i.e. what happens when we *share* in each other's lives.

In chapter five I will develop the points made in this chapter and how they affect among the '79 generation in particular the rise of nationalism. In the next chapter I firstly deal with some of the generative themes of the '45 generation and how these have impacted upon their responses to the recent historic political developments in Scotland.

# *The Production of Indifference*

Ah'll no be votin.

Hugh Young  
(Retired Miner)  
19th April 1999

## **4.1 The Local History Group**

As with the structuring presence of poor sound insulation mediating the possibility of anti- social neighbours, or local economic decline mediating the failure of a traditional aestival *Fun Day*, in this chapter I investigate the semantic horizon operative among the '45 generation and how, in relation to the creation of the Scottish parliament, this horizon renders this event meaningful or meaningless.

Whether it is housing conditions of poor sound insulation, the political union of Scotland with England or the creation of the Scottish parliament, each of these "things" do not possess their meaning in themselves. Precisely because they are fundamental structural realities, they often disappear from view the conditions for the possibility of more visible contests of meaning so that their structuring reality is not revealed until some event occurs to highlight their presence.

In this chapter I argue that the establishment of the Scottish parliament revealed a normally unseen aspect of locals' class structuration. I argue that because the creation of the Scottish parliament was a unique historic event, it also provided a unique ethnographic opportunity to elicit the depth of indifference towards "Scottish history" that has been reached by the '45 generation. I argue that so accustomed have many informants become to the absence of "Scottish history," that not only have they have been taken by surprise by its re-emergence, but are stunned at what is now revealed as their politico-historic obsolescence and seem not only unable but *unwilling* to reconcile themselves to the events of 1999.

At an early stage of fieldwork it was clear that there exists a generation and tradition whose members are antithetical to any meaningful engagement in the current political developments so that the ethnographer of 1999 can not suggest "we are all nationalists" (McCrone 1998) nor understand this as a fault, but as a profound response to definite structural conditions that are just as real and valid as the emerging and more successful developments I identify among the '79 generation.

Taking up the theme of the crisis in the reproduction of locality already discussed, I transfer the same issues involved onto the larger canvas of "Scotland" and "history" by looking at data gathered while attending the local *Local History Group*. Such at least was my intent upon joining the group in February 1999. Having attended the group regularly for over two years, I argue the extraordinary thesis that in relation to how locals constitute or fail to constitute local and national history, a local history group can make the movement of history "disappear."

On Tuesday 19th January (1999) I walked to the local *Corrie Centre* hoping to arrange to join the history group. I arrived early and took the opportunity to look around. On a notice board was an advertisement publicising an up-coming all-day seminar the following Saturday at St

Brycedale Centre in Kirkcaldy on "Problem Neighbours." As the first members began to arrive I introduced myself. One of the elderly members informed me there were in fact two history groups; the afternoon group which meets at one-thirty and the evening group which meets at seven-fifteen. Jokingly, he advised if I was "interested in gossip," attending the groups would be ideal.

Both groups met every Tuesday at the *Corrie Centre*, a former pre-school nursery named after the local author Joe Corrie. The afternoon group has met continually since 1989. Originally the group was to be a one-off course on local history organised by the *Workers Educational Association*<sup>1</sup> scheduled to run for ten weeks. This course had originated from the interest in local history generated by the *Corrie Festival* held in the village in 1986 to commemorate the opening of the Corrie Centre in 1985.

The two groups have been the major site of the production of texts on Cardenden in the shape of pictorial booklets, calendars and a five volume series of booklets of reminiscences begun in 1989. At each evening meeting it was the *Workers Educational Association* (WEA) tutor (Eileen Nisbet) who took the initiative in proposing the subject-matter for meetings. It was normally Eileen who decided which place and history was to be read to the group so as to stimulate discussion. Topics covered included the history of Glenrothes, the history of the East Neuk of Fife, the history of St. Andrews and the history of Abbot's House in Dunfermline.

While I attended a few of the afternoon group meetings, it was the evening group that I attended regularly. From the beginning I enjoyed participating in the weekly meetings. The group seemed that rarest of things: an ethnographic site where there was no frustrating search for

---

<sup>1</sup> For the role of the WEA within the history of what is termed the movement for independent working class education, see Brian Simon (ed.) 1990 *The Search for Enlightenment: the working class and adult education in the twentieth century*, NIACE, Leicester.



"something" to keep a sense of locality alive as members were able to draw upon an abundance of material via their collective backward glance to the past. In addition, a relaxed and informal atmosphere among the group meant it proved to be an invaluable ethnographic site. Undoubtedly, being a local myself helped members feel comfortable with the novel presence of someone continually taking notes throughout meetings.

When introducing myself to members at the afternoon group, I began explaining who I was and why I was asking to sit in the group and gave a brief summary of my research. When I had finished, one hard of hearing 89 year-old member turned to her neighbour (Mrs Doig) asking her to explain what I had said. "He's here tae study us Jenny" was her matter-of-fact reply.

To judge by the comments passed and views expressed throughout the meetings I am confident that members hid nothing from view and so provided a privileged insight into cultural meaning at an important point in time. It is to this group that I owe my grasp of the historical context of Cardenden; of the "something" that Cardenden was and that afforded me, through endless anecdotes and conversations, an insight into the rich texture to local life that Cardenden was able to produce within its residents.

#### **4.2 The Practice of Memory & Locality**

As an indication of the relevance of Benedict Anderson's phrase "the spectre of comparisons" (1998), the opening words of the preface of the first volume (1989) of local history group booklets read as follows:

*Now, more than ever before, people are becoming aware of their heritage, especially those who have emigrated. Many did not realise they had a heritage until they had left the home shores behind them.*

Whether one is leaving native shores or coalmines behind, the achievement of distance whether via emigration or temporally and socially in the case of de-industrialisation, each change in circumstance produces a new relationship to the past and provides a powerful incentive for discovering the fact that one has a "history" or "heritage." Initially the group members did undertake historical research such as copying the first census information by hand as it related to Cardenden; helping to preserve the site of the medieval ruin of *Carden Tower*, and erecting a plaque to commemorate the local landmark such as the "Big Tree," felled in 1933 to make way for road improvements, and which the *Community Council* (established 1978) intend to 'replant' in a derelict space to be made into a *Community Garden* sometime in 2002, and marking the local spot where the last duel was fought in Scotland in 1826 etc.

As the years have passed however the major function of the group is to re-create an experience of community and conviviality among members. To achieve this, the group's normal focus of attention is upon the 1920s, 30s and 40's. In my experience the members accomplish this sense of community and common identity among themselves quite easily, which helps explain why the groups have lasted for twelve years. The primary function then is to re-create the experience of belonging to each other and to re-create the Cardenden of their memory *in the present* via informal "memory work." It is because the group establishes "history" via how they establish *communitas* i.e. upon the basis of shared *memories* of locality, as opposed to a shared interest in studying Scottish history *per se*, that explains the necessity of their focus on a particular time frame and, as I will argue, a particular idea and practice of "studying history."

Re-calling the past is a forum for sharing experiences and listening to others' unique memories of the past. This knowledge is unique to this generation so that listening to one another remember is profoundly affirming of a generational identity as it affirms the value of what one

knows and has experienced. Through this weekly memory work then, informants reclaim a certain contemporaneity and status in the village and are pleased that their calendars are sought after at the end of each year and their five volumes of local history have been well received.

I often noted the members seemed to have at their disposal a mnemonic ability only possible in a group of the same generation and experience of local village life i.e. the ability to generate distance and 'Otherness'; their ability to frame the present as "merely current" through sheer longevity by evoking their early lives and times as "gone forever", so as to produce an appreciation of the difference they can instantiate by sharing their memories. As Ball has it:

*A critique of the everyday can be generated only by a kind of alienation effect, insofar as it is put into contact with its own radical other, such as an eradicated past.*

(in Shields 1999: 78).

Informants' memory work is person-oriented and event-centred. Stories and remembering therefore tend to be local in reach. It is not the memory work of ideas or meaning, far less ideology or politics. Hence my original thoughts were that my research interests i.e. current constructions of nationalism, would remain marginal to the interests of the group and that my participation in the local history group would simply provide useful background material.

Listening to the experiences and the reality informants remembered was to form the impression that they belong to a time so imbued with community that it produced near-identical interests due to the highly homogenous reality of the single-occupational community; a level of community, when it is remembered upwards of seventy years later, that is accompanied by a bonding that reproduces *again* a level of

*communitas* among them despite the fact that the objective conditions that made this *communitas* possible have disappeared.

Each week members got down to details of people, places and incidents from their past, whether funny, sad, tragic, remarkable or quotidian. During a meeting with the afternoon group Mrs Doig told the group about her grandmother, born in 1873, and her working life:

She went tae work in the Leslie mill fae six in the morning til six at night at ten years auld. Prinlaws mill in Leslie. A flax mill; for the manufacture e linen. When she was twelve she did it full time. Before it was wane day at school, the next at the mill. The system e half-timers wisnae abolished till 1936. A jute mill is the dirtiest place on earth.

Another member (Nan Pearson) remembered the struggles of neighbours:

She wis that mingin she sold her soap coupons in the shop. And she hid twelve bairns. Ah mind ma sister wis a rent collector, collectin wages. An one day Ah saw him [Jimmy Ritchie] sittin in the scullery wi a hammer breakin his plaster after his broken leg tae get back tae his work earnin money. Mrs Gardner she hid sixteen bairns and she stayed in a single end.

Another scene was painted by Adam Ingram:

*The first blast of the day was at 5.25 a.m. and lasted for five minutes. Shorter blasts were then emitted at 6.00 a.m., 9.30 a.m., 9.50 a.m., 1.30 p.m., 2.00 p.m., 5.30 p.m., 5.50 p.m., 9.30 p.m. and finally at 10.00 p.m. . There was, too, the Sound of Silence. I can recall five: learning the Deaf and Dumb Alphabet at the Cubs; watching the funeral procession of Johnny Thomson, the Celtic goalkeeper, in September, 1931 and eight weeks later, the funerals of nine of the ten men killed in the Bowhill Colliery disaster;*

*looking at the first pictures of Belsen Concentration Camp in the Pathe news at the Goth; and finally the two - minutes silence at 11.00 a.m. on November 11th every year in remembrance of those who died in the service of their country in two World Wars.*

This seductive evocation of “yesterday” where the pit horn sounds to mark the progression of the day, evokes a representation of village life hard to resist; a time when all the local pits in the West Fife area at midnight every Hogmanay sounded their horns in unison to greet the new year. There is a clear evocation of a sense of a shared marking and experiencing of time.<sup>2</sup> It is because of this ability to recall a substantive past that a local history group is possible, and the present is often seen in terms of decline in relation to this past. There is a clear sense of temporal dislocation which is unsurprising given that they have first hand experience of the arrival of industrial modernity and its subsequent decline.

Because of the informality of the group and the absence of anything resembling a set course, often by chance, after the tutor had read one or two pages of a set text, the group would begin chatting about some particular topic related or unrelated to the text. When a particular topic emerged, such as suicide, members would recount among themselves stories about who in the village had killed themselves and proceed to list all known cases to each other and speculate or divulge the reasons for each; from men caught avoiding conscription during the Second World War to the more recent tragedy of a young soldier from the village unable to cope with the trauma of serving in Kosovo.

This method of procedure proved invaluable as a means of accessing the extent of local knowledge. Members were tremendous sources of information not simply of historical interest but of daily events in the village. At any particular meeting was discussed who had died or who

had been buried; where the police had been called to in the village since the last meeting and why, and what was discussed at the last Community Council meeting etc. Having remarked on one occasion to the members that they seemed to know everything going on in the village, one member asked, "Dae ye ken there's seven paedophiles in the village?" (Annie Laird), at which a discussion ensued of convicted paedophiles and other local instances of sexual abuse and where the perpetrators lived etc.

Members exhibited an expertise in locality and belonging and kinship played the major part in locating and identifying and knowing a person. If, when a particular story was being related, there was someone unknown to any of the members, the anecdote was put on hold until he or she was identified (normally) via kinship. Once all protagonists had been identified, the story could resume. It was this performing and evidencing of the enduring reality of kin-based relatedness that reproduced the group dynamic and kept the past alive in the present.

Unsurprisingly, informants identified the high watermark of locality with those of the coalmining industry i.e. 1895–1965. Importantly, within this period is also included a whole series of 'superstructural' structures of *finality* at the level of cultural organisation whose perceived decline are viewed as evidence of a defining decline of locality. Hence the theme of lamentation surrounding the perceived rise in the *uterine family*, for example, as symptomatic of a general moral and cultural "decline." As the following exchange has it:

Hugh: *But when the pit and Co-Op shut; aa the wee things. Aa the pictures shut. You go up Bowhill noo an it's always like it's half shut. You had movement e people all the time.*  
Nan: *When you had the pictures; when the pictures came oot and you were drivin you had*

---

<sup>2</sup> In April 2001 the *Number 1 Goth* town clock, after more than forty years of silence, began chiming the hours again. Unfortunately this belated Community Council initiative was accomplished after the Goth itself had closed as a public house.



*to go like a snail because they never walked on the pavement, they were on the road.*

Other "wee things" included the display of wedding cakes during the week prior to the day of a wedding in the bakery display window. Also:

*When a death occurred in the village, intimations were posted throughout on a black and white card approx. 9" by 5" giving all information as to time and place of the funeral.*

Prior to the local cemetery becoming full "All funerals were to the cemetery - there was no crematorium in those days" (*Auch. Of Yester*. Vol. 2: 17-18). Today however the spectacle of death is privatised and routinely takes place outwith the village in Kirkcaldy crematorium. Lasting until the late nineteen-seventies, a wooden notice board stood beside the entrance to what was then Cardenden library and the local Registry Office. On this board and other strategically placed "telegraph" poles, locals were literally "kept posted" of local births, deaths and marriages etc. on a daily basis so that the reality of the reproduction of locality and locals was literally a daily spectacle to be seen. As indicated in chapter one however, such is the decline in behaviour among younger locals in public space today that such a village notice board would be vandalised in a matter of days. In contrast to today then, is the following recollection of the day of the annual "School Treat":

All the children made their way to their school about lunch time on the Saturday in July. The local bands, pipes and drums and brass, turned out to lead the procession. The children from Denend School wait patiently at the Sweet Shop at the foot of Station Road and joined in the procession as it passed by, then on to the Goth to collect St. Ninian's School and Auchterderran School pupils. From there the procession went right up to Woodend Park (the one just below the Golf Club)....The streets were lined with mums and dads, brothers and sisters, and aunties and uncles all cheering as

the children marched past waving wee flags and balloons.

Today it is impossible to reproduce the level of community where its reality is a matter of opening one's eyes and seeing the spectacle that is physically there to be seen. So obvious and secure was the daily production of coal and locality, locals did not need to be reflexive about their identity and locality. Yet arguably it is this very complacency and unproblematic nature of an integralism of identity, locality and nation which lead to an inability to respond to the crisis which did come after 1965, and which has continued into the present. What then are some of the consequences of this rich integralism of the past for the '45 generation's views on the politico-historic events of 1999?

#### **4.3 The Practice Of Indifference**

At the first evening group meeting I attended (3rd February 1999), Eileen reads a paper entitled *A Brief History of St Andrews*<sup>3</sup> dealing with the destruction of St. Andrews medieval cathedral. I wait with notebook ready to record locals' views on this iconic event of Scottish history, confident that "meaning" cannot be avoided. As Eileen reads I look around: a group of friends ensconced in comfortable chairs cosseted by warm familiarity and a youthful and enthusiastic history tutor reading the familiar tale of the destruction of arguably the most important buildings<sup>4</sup> of its time at the hands of iconoclast "heretics." At this early stage of fieldwork i.e. prior to the structuralist approach I was to begin to develop eighteen months later, listening to Eileen read at this meeting, the thought occurred to me that my entire fieldwork could hinge upon the immanent moments of comment and discussion about this historic event ten weeks prior to the first elections to the new Scottish parliament.

---

<sup>3</sup> The material read to the group was often of poor scholarship and had been downloaded from the internet by Eileen at home and photocopied for the group. This was so the WEA avoided complications regarding copyright.

<sup>4</sup> During fieldwork I learned of Richard Demarco's plans to restore St. Andrews cathedral to act as a national symbol for a new Scotland for a new millennium.

In the event no discussion followed and no quote was gratefully scribbled into my note book. In many ways this proved to be paradigmatic of the meetings as a whole in that it served to confirm the purpose of the group was not to discuss "history" but to swap memories of the past and gossip about current events in the village or as reported in the media. It was not surprising then that at the meeting immediately after the elections to the parliament took place (May 5), the only comment was: "Ye can argue aboot politics till yer blue in the face and ye'll never get anywhere" (Jim Russell); a comment which was greeted with obvious approval from the members present. The first meeting I came to view as paradigmatic of the triumph of *structure* over *event* / *history* even in the teeth of eventful history; and the reversal of two hundred and ninety-two years of structure.

To give an idea of the level of members' discourse I reproduce the following short exchange that did occur after the reading concerning the destruction of St Andrews cathedral:

Ego: What's a Culdee church?

Eileen: Ma friend Sharon's a pagan. She's gonnae get married in a field. She says that's the true Scottish religion.

Jim: Ma brither wis an atheist. And what about aa these nations that worship totem poles?

Hugh: Where does Roman Catholicism come fae? Does it come fae the Romans?

Wull: God only knows.

Moir: Ah dinnae ken.

Regarding a recent spate of job losses in Fife in the spring of 1999 and the topicality of the new Scottish parliament, there occurred the following rare exchange that touched on politics:

Annie: *Ye jist wonder how many joabs'll be left once it gets gaun.*

Hugh: Ah'll tell ye, a hunder an twenty nine joabs.<sup>5</sup> That's how much. See when they get somethin, what dae they dae? They go and build a big posh buildin. An look at the money bein spent on a temporary building. A temporary building! That's sick.

Moir: Ah jist switch aff when it comes tae politics.

Annie: Me an aa.

Hugh: Bit we cannae solve our problems wi the parliament we've got the noo! Where's aa this money gonnæ come fae?

Ego: Where do you think it has come from, this new parliament and nationalism?

Hugh: What started it all was that film *Braveheart*. And what did that prove? That Scotsmen couldnae agree wi theirsels! This Scottish parliament is jist anither talkin shop. What else can it be?

Nan: Ah dinnae hink there'll be many SNP aboot here. Ah've ayeways voted Liberal.

Hugh: Ah've voted Labour aa ma life. A monkey could stand an Ah'd vote for it.

There is a paradox in that the history group members who belong to a generation that had a rich experience of locality and society and experienced the height of the domination of politics by class interests and locality as occupational community, unanimously exhibit a unionist political stance and even a nostalgia for the *status quo ante*. It seems clear that the reason for a connection between the '45 generation, one-nation unionism and the experience of the acme of locality and community is that of a lived and rich connection with the idea and experience of a convincing "Britishness."

Clearly if one organises one's political identity on a British basis and if, after eighteen years of Conservative Party minority rule in Scotland, informants remain prepared to vote for a "Labour monkey," then very little can happen to alter such a vote, and such a voter can only be alienated from the constitutional politics that have dominated Scottish politics for a generation. So assured is Hugh in particular about where

---

<sup>5</sup> The proposed number of members for the Holyrood parliament.

his interests lie and in which party his political allegiance is best served, he is willing to parody himself.

From our weekly discussions it emerged clearly that a primary experience and therefore source of memories for the members was of material insecurity, as well as a sense of gratitude that comes from belonging to the first working class generation to have reaped substantial material benefits and a security unknown to previous generations. When coupled with a positive experience of being British, this has had the effect of freeing informants from any need to engage, with any sense of (materially-inspired) urgency, with the meaning of politics or the new parliament and therefore recent history itself.

This indifference is not wilful but has real presence. And because this structural indifference can not be turned on and off at will, this determinedly anti-nationalist stance can also be generalised to implicate the "archaeology" of the crisis in *socialist* ideology i.e. the absence of the '45 generation's uptake of nationalism can be said regarding their parallel non-politicisation of class or up-take of socialism.

My elderly informants' political identity is based upon the two co-ordinates of nation and class, being *British* and being working class. While in the immediate aftermath of World War Two this combination was responsible for such great achievements as the Welfare State, today this class and (British) nation integralism results in a political inertia as, while they are crystal clear they are Scottish, I found no trace whatever of a politicisation of this national identity.

### **The Millennium**

The unprecedented opportunities during fieldwork to record a local production of meaning instead often provided the opportunity to record a crass antipathy borne of unwelcome "events" which only served to highlight an embarrassment at "substantive meaning." One such event to

occur so as to reveal the systematic nature of their indifference to "the present as history" was the millennium. Early on during fieldwork the following item appeared (November 27th 1998) in *The Fife Free Press*:

Ideas Wanted to Mark 2000 by Cardenden and Kinglassie Community Council. To request info. call community council secretary Mr. D Taylor 7 Kinglassie Rd. Woodend.

At the meeting of Tuesday March 2<sup>nd</sup> (1999), one of the members read a letter sent to the group regarding a forthcoming *Millennium Meeting* to be held on March 16<sup>th</sup>. The letter came from the Community Council and copies had been sent to all the user groups of the Corrie Centre in an effort to solicit ideas and interest from anyone who wished to become involved in planning how the village would mark the beginning of the third Christian millennium. There was no enthusiasm: "*An excuse tae spend money!*" is how one member described it.

This attempt at a "reasoned" rejection of what was widely portrayed in the media as "millennium hype" perhaps can be more accurately depicted as an alienation from the idea that time has a meaning; that members have any participation rights in whatever meta-narrative or meaning history may have i.e. a cultural poverty is masked as cultural critique. Conversations regarding the millennium revealed informants' indifference to politics to be part of a much wider alienation from history to the extent that, during a brief exchange regarding the millennium, an informant could opine without the least self-consciousness: "Well Ah hope there's somethin bloody decent oan the telly" (Jim Russell, 4th May 1999).

Even more poignant assertions of "meaning" at the millennium, such as came from one 67 year old retired miner who told me: "I'm delighted to see this day because no male member of the race (i.e. his family) has ever reached sixty - seven years old!" reveal the "absurdity" of any self-estimation among them of attempts at



establishing a real relation to the millennium. The signification of "events" and time is left to the media or the idiosyncrasies of the lone individual, so that their discourse on "meaning" is unable to reach "escape velocity" from participating in the quotidian discourse of local decline.

### **The New Parliament**

As regards indifference to the new Holyrood parliament, there seems to be an analogy of structural indifference regarding both events; that each act to reveal a cultural logic of "indifference" resulting in an inability to respond to history. Hence it is after a lengthy discourse on "cultural decline" that Wilma Beattie (4 Orebank Road) summarised an hour-long interview with these words:

Actually, what Ah'm talking tae ye aboot,  
you're talkin tae a 56 year auld woman that is  
gien ye her view on life in 1999 before the  
millennium. So this is bound tae be, can go  
somewhere in what you're daen.

Indifference to the events of 1999 are by no means restricted to local history group informants. On Sunday 11 July 1999, interviewing an elderly retired man in Woodend Park, after introducing myself and my research project of locals' thoughts on the establishment of the Scottish parliament, he replied: "Naw, Ah'm past aa that. Ah'm past aa that." During the first few weeks of interviewing locals, such sentiments were not uncommon and left me at a loss as to how to interpret them. Often I felt I had missed an opportunity to learn something. However, realising that a generative theme of locals was this sense of having nothing to say or contribute about these events, I began to find such indifference of ethnographic value; that a seventy-plus year old working class man could come to the door ten days after "The most important

political event in three hundred years"<sup>6</sup>, and say he is "past all that," is significant and raises the obvious question as to how is it the Scots are creating a Scottish parliament, how the fruition of thirty years of constitutional politics can be reduced to a sort of massive *déjà vu*?

Throughout the two years I attended the group not one instance of "nationalist discourse" whatever was observed. On the contrary, the idea of "one nation Britain" unionism I found to be alive and well so that older informants in particular view 1 July 1999 as peculiarly adventitious. It seems safe to conclude therefore that Scottish nationalism is very much a product of a younger generation.

A number of elderly people (especially women) interviewed were *angry* at the success of Scottish nationalism and were clear that its success represented a *personal* defeat; as if the defeat of their preferred constitutional arrangement at some level involved a defeat of their "identity." Such was their deep antipathy that a number of elderly would-be informants on the doorsteps could not even bring themselves to talk to me about the creation of the Scottish parliament, preferring to slam their door shut after I informed them of my research interest.

Such "informants" then have no sense of the new parliament being theirs; the result of semantic or political struggle on their part. Whatever or whoever is authoring the present historic changes it is not them, and nor are they in any way imagining a fictive desire for Home Rule harboured "all along" now that the Scottish parliament has been re-established.

The general election campaign to the new parliament coincided near enough to the day with the Nato bombardment of Yugoslavia and the

---

<sup>6</sup> Scottish Television's political pundit Bernard Ponsonby advertising *Vote 99: Scotland Debates* to be aired that evening (22nd April 1999).

crisis in Kosovo. I quote the following exchange from a meeting in March sparked off by these events:

Jim:<sup>7</sup> The British flag as such is steeped in blood. In Palestine they shot Arabs left right and centre. The middle east has been fighting since the Bible days. Ah think it'll get worse here in this country. All these ethnic folk comin in an eventually they'll take over. There'll be war between them an the whites. In about twenty five years we'll be the foreigners.

Annie: We're the foreigners already. Look at aa the hooses in Cardenden an Bowhill, they're aa owned by other folk.

Nan: What are we needin tae split this country fir?

In the brief discussions concerning Kosovo and Yugoslavia there was a sense of the inevitability of ethnic conflict. In the view of the members, people are what they are, and this defining "whatness", whether conceived in terms of ethnicity or religion or nationality, is permanent. As Jim asked during the discussion: "How do you change human nature?"

At one of the meetings just before the inaugural Holyrood general election (19th April), to try to take advantage of the media coverage and to stimulate discussion of politics, I informed the group I intended to ask people on the doorstep what they thought of the creation of the new parliament. At this, the tutor, whose husband is a policeman, hurriedly advised: "If ye dinnae hae permission and folk complained ye could get done fir breach e the peace." In the discussion that followed, Hugh said "Ah'll no be votin" and Annie said she too would not be voting. Such were my initial attempts at ethnography on working class nationalism.

---

<sup>7</sup> Jim had served with distinction during the Second World War.

What I found remarkable was the complacency of members towards the new constitutional settlement; at what effectively amounted to a semantic boycott of Scottish history by members of a local history group. Given that they were quite comfortable with this indifference, an obvious question arose i.e. what does this tell us about their twelve year study of local history?

### **The Absence of History**

Those who are partial to the old dialect may think the language has changed for the worse, but fashion and our schools, and our close intercourse with England are transmuting us every year, every month, to the general standard of the empire.

Rev. Dr. Andrew Murray  
Minister at Auchterderran  
*Second Statistical Account*  
January 1832

Because of the long disappearance of Scotland from the political realm, discourse on "Scottish history" often emerged during fieldwork to the extent of registering its felt absence. Among the local history group there was unanimous agreement that the history they were taught at school contained "nothing about Scotland." The following exchange was typical:

Adam: *It's one thing Ah regret when Ah was at school, Ah never learned a thing about this village.*

Anne: *We never learned a thing about Scotland when we were at school. Even at school we never ever done anything but English history.*

Adam: *It's something that didnae bother me then but it does now. We were taught about England but never Scotland. And never the history of Fife.*

While there is a clear paradox where the '45 generation lament the absence of Scottish history while simultaneously exhibiting an alienation from "the present as history," there is an important and new interpretation of this absence of Scottish history among the younger generation. I quote at length from an interview with Peter which I judge to be representative of the '79 generation's discourse on the perceived "conspiracy" behind the absence of Scottish history:

*It's aa mair or less persecution. Ah think we've been kept at that level [lowers palm towards ground] aa the time. Ye wernae tellt anythin' aboot Scottish history because it could have caused trouble. An aa they fitba matches wi Scotland an England in the seventies it wid ha been even bigger bloodbaths cause it'd jist be like the English comin up tae Culloden or Stirlin Bridge an aa that fuckin cairry oan aa rolled intae wane. That's a lot e the reason why they never tellt ye fuck all e it tae. Ah mean that thing in the paper<sup>8</sup> the day aboot learnin bairns Scottish history; when we were at the school, that'd be what, thirteen, 1972, wane e the teachers we got...he wis SNP. He used tae turn roond tae ye an say right then, when wis the battle e Hastings? An every cunt says 1066. Right then; when wis the battle e Culloden? Nae cunt kent. So he'd tell ye. So fir a hail week when we got Modern Studies he wis tell'n us aboot Scottish history until wane day he come in an says eh 'Right, Ah've been gien a ticken off'. He'd been pu'd up by the heidmaister who said 'You're no hear tae learn bairns, you're here tae learn them what the O level's aboot, no what's happenin roond aboot them'. And this is aa comin tae light noo, twenty year doon the fuckin line. Bit Ah mean really, we should ken mair aboot what's happenin. Then again if ye gane doon the street and say tae some e they boys, eh aye, dae ye ken aboot this happened up in the Highlands five hunder year ago? Oh fuck off we're no interested in that. There's a certain time when, if ye dinnae get learned it at school there's a big period in between until you come tae yer senses an say well really Ah should be*

---

<sup>8</sup> A front-page article in the *Sunday Mail* newspaper, 24 October 1999.

payin attention tae that, an Ah should be takin mair tae dae wi that. But there's that space in between when yer mair likely, mair fuckin like half e they cunts doon there smashin bus shelters an pissin the drink against a wa' or gaun fae this pub tae that pub ye ken. Bit there'll come a time when a lot e they boys sittin doon there'll be sayin 'Ya cunt Ah wonder what happened?' What sticks in yer mind when ye were at the skill? It's 1066, King Harold getting the fuckin arrow in his ee, that big tapestry fuckin thing, Guy Fawkes fuckin settin fire tae the ... tryin tae think e something that happened in Scotland at that same fuckin time an ye widnae ken.

This lament for a knowledge that the education system failed to provide generations of Scottish children is said with no surprise; it is a matter-of-fact stating the obvious that nobody taught local or national history or culture (*vide* Beveridge & Turnbull 1989). As the historian Michael Lynch confirms:

Scotland, until the introduction of the Standard Grade syllabus in 1990, was one of the few countries in Europe where a nation's own history was not a compulsory part of the history curriculum in its schools.

(1992: xv).

The perception of a neglect of "Scottish culture" within the educational system was a topical issue during fieldwork. In an article in *The Scotsman* newspaper (4 February 1999) reporting on the long-awaited report 'The School Curriculum and the Culture of Scotland' by the *Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum* (SCCC), I read that this body recommended *inter alia* that more Scottish history and culture be taught in schools and that the Scots language should also be taught in schools, as part of a drive to give lessons a greater "Scottish flavour." We also learn from the article that a member of the original SCCC review group (Robbie Robertson) had said fifteen of its eighteen members had signed a letter deploring the "suppression" of their original report which said eighty-six per cent of people questioned wanted a "fairly or



very well pronounced" Scottish theme to education. Mr Robertson said the revised report was less radical and took too narrow a view of culture, adding: "The Scottish people have been conned." Nicola Sturgeon, the SNP education spokeswoman commented: "It is impossible to escape the conclusion that the report has been watered down." As I will argue in chapter five, these skirmishes are only the beginning of a new era of cultural politics in Scotland that is already upon us.

#### **4.4 The Unimagined Community: The Kingdom of Fife**

The "disappearance" of Scottish history is systematic and integral. As the quote from Adam above highlights, the suppression of Fife / regional identity and history is viewed as part and parcel of the absence of Scottish history. The absence or unavailability then of regional and national historiography further mediates the "thin cultural forms" characteristic of working class consciousness, and helps explain the weak cultural content of Scottish nationalism identified by McCrone (1989; 1998). McCrone argues explicit forms of nationalism tend to be oppositional because their function is to challenge an already established form of national consciousness. Scottish nationalism then, being oppositional, involves the work of "consciousness raising"; an integral element of which involves drawing upon or "reclaiming" suppressed local and regional histories and identities.

As already highlighted, older informants have every reason to speak of their locality and of themselves in a *substantive* vocabulary because of the richness of their many local relationships characteristic of the occupational community and which were repeated throughout central and west Fife. The younger generation in comparison are unable to produce this quality of local identity as they experience the de-centering forces of deindustrialisation. Both senses of locality across the generations then are explicable by structural forces: in the '45 generation such forces actively constructed locality and among the '79 generation

they have acted to end locality. But what constitutes or disintegrates local and regional identity is not simply "material forces" but cultural assumptions and practices. As regards Fife identity, for example, such cultural beliefs surrounding a certain carefully constructed and false Protestant and modernist and British historiography has helped to disappear Fife from local consciousness so that the difficulties of mobilisation via class or national or local village identity are as nothing when compared to the "non-existence" of a regional i.e. Fife identity.

Reproductions of Fife as a tourist attraction or a past collection of places of medieval significance seem to be the only two possible significations of Fife; as if as a semantic space for the production of identification it remains inert. There is then a dearth of production of regional identity outside of the picturesque coastal villages and St. Andrews so that it seems nothing much has changed since James V's diagnosis of Fife as "a beggar's mantle with a fringe of gold." This inability to imagine Fife is another site where the normally invisible fact of the "thin forms" of working class culture is made visible. The cultural invisibility of much of Fife then is directly related to the cultural poverty of identification practices of the ex-coalmining areas. It was coal that accounts for their migration to Fife and now that the mining industry is gone, the only self-representations such ex-coalmining areas produce are those of the "memory industry" of local history collections of days gone by.

When the Royal Commission under Lord Wheatley outlined the reform of local government in Scotland in September 1969, it proposed the end of Fife as a political and administrative unit of local government. At this, there emerged a public campaign to "save Fife" which succeeded when in 1971 the Heath government's White Paper added 'Fife Region' to Wheatley's proposals.

In October 1998 an all-Fife radio station named *Kingdom FM* was launched. Undoubtedly, this represents a major boost to the imagining of

regional identity. In the first few weeks and months of broadcasting, this theme of regional identity was consciously, even relentlessly, pursued so that very quickly *Kingdom FM* has become the most listened to radio station in Fife. Already by December 1998 there was the conspicuous 'invention of tradition' whereby Fife Constabulary's Chief constable delivered what was described as his "traditional Christmas message to the people of Fife."

Fife's historical significance emerged in tandem with the emergence and history of Scotland so that, beginning with the Protestant Reformation in 1560 when the ecclesial and cultural primacy enjoyed by the archdiocese of St. Andrews within medieval Catholic Scotland abruptly ended, and culminating in the political 'end of Scotland' in 1707, Fife has participated in this decline. Arguably, the pseudo-history of local history groups in Fife evidence the regional equivalent of the national petrification of "*Andy Stewart and the kilted police*" (*vide* Reilly 1998) where, as the national imagination became petrified in the 1688 constitutional settlement, so there was a regional petrification of the parish state.

As with the *Fun Day* discussed in chapter one where only the attempt at community actually reveals the normal failure of *communitas*, so the local history group shares this paradox in that only the attempt to constitute an interest in a constitution of locality and history reveals the endemic inability to imagine a coherent Fife identity; where it can be truly said, "*Nuthin ever happens in Fife*" (Hugh Young) as if *nothing has been said*.

Because Fife as a category of the imagination does not mediate meaning, is more accurately to be described as a category of *meaninglessness*, as a source of identity Fife has little semantic reality in the ninth and tenth generations (since the Act of Union) history group members because they stand at the head of a misrecognised and "deconstructed" Fife.

## Language & Locality

Question 39. Is your accent particularly offensive to the ear of strangers, or are they pleased with it or easily reconciled to it?

Answer: They complain of its being drawling, and that it impresses them with a belief that the person speaking is sour and ill-tempered.

Rev. Dr. Andrew Murray  
Minister at Auchterderran  
*Old Statistical Account*  
4 Dec. 1790

I recall in a conversation with one of the *East Of Scotland* manual operatives (James Shand) he said, "the Fife accent is horrible." Again, on 7 September 2001, the same theme emerged while talking with two locals about a television adaptation of one of Ian Rankin's novels. I asked whether they thought the programme was unrealistic because of the language usage i.e. English. They said it had to be in English because the Fife accent is "horrible." On the use of language Bourdieu writes:

Linguistic relations are always relations of power and, consequently, cannot be elucidated within the compass of linguistic analysis alone. Even the simplest linguistic exchange brings into play a complex and ramifying web of historical power relations between the speaker...and an audience.

(in Jenkins 1992: 154).

It seems then that a consequence of "Fifers" having internalised a sense of their linguistic marginality is that Fife cannot be constituted via language as a valued source of self and regional identity so long as such views are held; so long as working class Fifers themselves do not read evaluations of accent as evidence of "domination." Listening to *Kingdom FM*, none of its disc jockeys speak Scots, far less with a working class Fife accent. The SNP's encouragement of Scots and Gaelic is problematic then as both suffer from the familiar modernising dilemma of being viewed as

"psychologically immediate but socially isolating"  
(Geertz 1993: 243).<sup>9</sup>

#### 4.5 The Caesura of 1 July 1999

Given the "alienating" educational system informants allude to as a matter of course, counter-hegemonic (or anti-modernist) ideologies that in any way are sourced in or draw upon "native" cultural traits, must routinely fail, and those that do succeed in any way will probably evidence a history of being appropriated with great reluctance. Among older informants especially there is, on the one hand, a hostility to the new Scottish parliament yet a definite lament for knowledge about Scottish history that seems to evidence a de-alignment of class and nation; in fact the acceptance of the disappearance of the Scottish nation at the political level. To try to answer the question when and how Scotland "disappeared" from local consciousness the following point made by Benedict Anderson is useful:

*What I am proposing is that Nationalism has to be understood, by aligning it not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which - as well as against which - it came into being.*

(in Bhabha 1990:1)

To trace then the archaeology of the *non-production* and disappearance from political consciousness of the nation is to identify the "large cultural systems" responsible.

#### Working Class Protestant Sectarianism

About fifty years ago, we persecuted the papists and burnt their chapels; now our enmity

---

<sup>9</sup> Unamuno argued it was scientifically demonstrable that the Basque language was unsuited to modernity. Irish Gaelic speakers were similarly viewed at one point as similarly 'unsuited' to modernity.

has ceased, and Catholics are admitted and have a right to the privileges possessed by Presbyterian and Episcopalian fellow-subjects.

Rev. Dr. Andrew Murray  
Minister at Auchterderran  
*Second Statistical Account*  
January 1832

I recall when first announcing to the members of the afternoon history group my research was concerned with present-day Cardenden and politics, as opposed to the *history* of Cardenden, the tutor, Anne Mead, a 1945 St. Andrews university history graduate insisted:

*Oh we're no interested in politics and religion. Two things. And that goes back to nineteen eighty-six. And we were all retired then. We didn't talk about that as that was too much trouble and division.*<sup>10</sup>

The reach of sectarian history then extends to curtail the study and discussions of the local history group members. "Religion" (itself a euphemism locals use for the historic strife between Catholicism and Protestantism) remains a taboo subject and, like local and Scottish history, is something else which is present only via its "absence." As with the marked inability or reluctance to discuss in any substantive fashion the destruction of St. Andrews cathedral, so there was little likelihood of any discussion of the destruction of the residence of the Catholic clergy in Auchterderran at the time of the Reformation.

Sectarianism was and remains an issue in the Scottish media during fieldwork and had a certain topicality given the debate surrounding the young Catholic composer James MacMillan's speech to the Edinburgh Festival in 2000. In his speech Macmillan identified Protestant sectarianism as having had disastrous effects on Scottish culture. Fears of anti-Catholic bigotry were sufficiently real to force the cancellation of a

---

<sup>10</sup> According to the *Catholic Directory for the Archdiocese of St. Andrews and Edinburgh* (2000), the Catholic population of Cardenden is 750 i.e. just over 15% of the population.



visit of the Irish Taoiseach to Carfin grotto in Lanarkshire, to commemorate the victims of the Irish Famine in February 2001. Concerns over sectarian strife locally seem to be well placed. In an article in *The Sunday Times* (3rd October 1999) Ian Rankin characterised his up-bringing in Cardenden as follows:

*I was brought up surrounded by bigotry and segregation, yet barely noticed it, my own myopia compounded by the fact that the society I lived in seemed to accept the condition.*

On several occasions when interviewing locals on their doorsteps and in their homes, the fear of Protestant sectarianism acted to instil a fearful apprehension of the consequences of Scottish independence. Such fear can only inhibit the development of political nationalism among locals who are afraid that Scotland will become another Ireland. "*We'll end up jist like Ireland*" (Anne Penman, Muirtonhill) was a persistent fear voiced, despite the clear historic changes and progress being made during 1999 in Northern Ireland.<sup>11</sup>

An ethnography of working class nationalism in Scotland has a close and highly comparable ethnographic site in Northern Ireland where another alignment of class and national identity is contesting the British state. While both Scottish and Irish nationalists contest the idea of Britain from within the territory of the United Kingdom, it is in the nationalist republican armed struggle where contesting the existence and nature of the British state is at its most extreme. No analysis can avoid the fact that to investigate the contestation of the British state from the standpoint of class, nationality, religion, culture and political ideology, one has to look at the nationalist struggle of *Sinn Fein* which is a working class party in conscious contradistinction to the middle class nationalist *Social and Democratic Labour Party* (SDLP). It was no accident then that the

---

<sup>11</sup> During fieldwork there occurred the first meeting (13 December 1999) of the North - South Irish Council where the Irish cabinet met with the Northern Ireland Assembly members; the first meeting of the Irish - British Council (16 December 1999) and the first public handshake between the British Prime Minister and representatives of Sinn Feinn.

Labour and unionist Secretary of State for Scotland, and author of *A History of the Working Classes in Scotland* (1920), Tom Johnston (1941-45), chose to characterise Scottish nationalism as "a sort of Sinn Fein movement" (Lynch 1992: 436-7) in order to persuade Winston Churchill to concede special latitude to Johnston as Secretary of State for Scotland.

From interviews with local residents it seems that Northern Ireland 'haunts' their views of Scottish nationalism as if to reveal the imagined existence of "frozen conflicts" which lie underneath the surface calm which independence will threaten. I reproduce below excerpts from interviews with Heather and Isobel:

*In the elections to the parliament did ye bother votin?*

Heather: Naw Ah didnae.

*You had problems with it in the first place?*

Heather: Well aye cause Ah've never thought that it was such a guid idea tae divide a wee island like this. Well we're bad enough o'er in Ireland bit tae start dividin us aa up, where's it aa gonnae stop?

Heather Stewart  
8 Lady Helen Cottages

*Do you think the new Scottish parliament is a good idea or a bad idea?*

Isobel: Ah think it's a bad idea.

*Did ye bother votin in the elections fir the parliament?*

Isobel: Aye Ah voted.

*D'ye mind if Ah ask how ye voted?*

Isobel: Ah voted against it...Ma husband's English, Ah'm Scottish, and Ah would almost say I'm sure that within about twenty five years we'll be another Northern Ireland.

*You think so?*

Isobel: Yes.

Isobel Sims  
10 Lady Helen Cottages

With the "return of history" to Scotland and with the prospect of more history to come, there comes the fear of the resumption of Catholic / Protestant struggle to "capture" the Scottish national identity. This real, though I believe unrealistic, fear is not confined to the memories of the *politicised* Protestant bigotry witnessed in Scotland in the nineteen-twenties and nineteen-thirties as the Orange Lodge in Cardenden only closed its doors in 1980. Fears and experiences of sectarianism are alive and well in the younger generation. In a lengthy interview with a young married couple (Peter and Margaret Paterson) in October 1999, both expressed fears of anti-Catholic bigotry at the prospect of an independent Scotland. I quote from Peter:

*The boys that work aside me, if it wis total independence the way they talk they would start ethnic cleansin. It wid start aff wi foreigners and wance they'd got rid e aa thame it'd start. Ye'd have Scotland right doon the middle. Ye'd end up wi aa the separate, dependin oan what religion took o'er, ye'd end up wi the ither wanes either getting forced up the way tae the Highlands or doon the way tae England.*

When non-Catholic working class locals express fears about a latent Protestant bigotry ready to re-emerge at the break up of the union one has to conclude that people are afraid of working class Protestant bigotry. The spectacle of working class Protestant bigotry and hatred and violence in Northern Ireland, televised to Scottish homes since the late nineteen sixties with the beginning of the Catholic Civil Rights movement's contestation of the sectarian statelet of Northern Ireland, provokes the predictable justification for counter-violence. Commenting on Northern Ireland a bricklayer with whom I often drank with in the *Number 1 Goth* at one point in the conversation remarked: "God made Catholics. The Armalite made them equal."<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> I have traced this formula to Gerry Adams' political biography *Before The Dawn* (1996) where it featured as a Catholic Nationalist slogan in Belfast.

While walking through Cardenden one can readily see the graffiti in support of the Irish Republican Army or the unionist equivalent is physically fading, sectarianism still has an unmistakable, if fading, presence. A young local Dominican friar, raised within the Church of Scotland, casually refers to the influence of Protestantism in Scottish history and society as the "forces of darkness". When asked how this squared with the fact that he had, at least nominally, been a Protestant for most of his life he replied: "Ah wis brought up to *nothing*."

So embedded are fears of conflict at the prospect of Scottish independence that often attempting *substantive* discussion on the subject of "Scottish nationalism" is futile; is incapable of being a discursive *subject-in-itself* because it is immediately surrounded by and *related to* other subjects such as Irish nationalism, Kosovo, Catholic-Protestant bigotry, the evils of ethnic cleansing etc., and so remains incapable of the expression "of itself" as it remains trapped within an apprehensive intentional horizon. However, within the cosy confines of the local history group it remains remarkable that a group of pensioners, who meet regularly in a local centre named after the local hero who wrote of the struggle of their mothers and fathers during the Depression, whose existence as a group is the result of a *Workers Educational Association* sponsored initiative which continues to supply a tutor for the evening group, still manages to convince themselves that politics and religion are taboo subjects for their discussions.

A social fact to be explained is the *de facto* alignment of Protestantism and political unionism; a historical continuity enduring over centuries representing a psychological continuum dating from the seventeenth century until today (*vide* Greenfeld 1992). Obvious candidates for the "large cultural systems" behind the self-censorship practised by the group is the Reformation and an original "free market" unionism. I believe only by deploying such large cultural systems can we explain the historico-cultural continuity and logic evidenced by comments, reported

in the *Sunday Herald* (8 July 2001), by the Grand Secretary of the Grand Orange Lodge of Scotland (Jack Ramsay) in reply to a question as to what would happen if Scotland were to end the union with England:

The Orange Order would become a paramilitary force...a spy behind enemy lines...It obviously implies a recourse to arms.

Unless one wants to accuse the Orange Order in Scotland of a form of "false consciousness" (which I do not) one has to concede this integral relation between cultural Protestantism and political unionism.

While the Scottish parliament and independent statehood "ended" in 1707, what went forward at this time was "Great Britain" and "the economy." Both the economy and the nation reached escape velocity from Scottish statehood. Nairn's (1981) thesis that the emergent bourgeoisie in Britain failed to revolutionise the political state, as did happen subsequently in continental Europe, producing the United Kingdom as an only half-modernised polity, has been correctly challenged in my view by Meiksins Wood (1991) who has argued because British capitalism was created by the bourgeoisie "from below," Britain in fact is the most thoroughly capitalist nation-state and has the most secularised culture in Europe (*vide* Gledhill 1992).

I find the analysis of Wood helpful in that it helps explain a trait I noticed during fieldwork i.e. a local secular working class thoroughly reduced to their economic role where they lack any pretence whatsoever at continuity from the medieval period and lack the cultural mores, such as parish feast days and fiestas often seen in continental Catholic Europe where a sense of locality and local identity is able to endure the vicissitudes of the arrival of modernity and the capitalist economy. In contrast, as far back as the Auchterderran of 1790, in answer to the *Old Statistical Account* inquiry: "Have your people any holy-days for recreation or merry-making?" the Rev. Dr. Murray replied:

Just one in the year, called handselmonday, and even the manner in which this is employed shows the sober-mindedness of the people.

What is interesting then about Scotland is the idea of modernity inaugurating the arrival of *homo economicus* came at the expense of the death of Scottish politics and history i.e. the act of union occurred for the sake of "economic reason" and an integral force in "the economy" reaching a fetishised place within modernity was the prior death of Scottish nationality and independence inaugurated by the Protestant Reformation. Comaroff (1985) has argued the cultural logic of Protestantism:

Mediated a protracted transformation of European social and productive systems' towards capitalism, and that Methodism was oriented towards inculcating a set of values and disciplines specifically associated with industrial capitalism.

(1985: 131).

Whereas with other nations the arrival of modernity and uneven development was meant to generate "catch up" nationalism (*vide* Gellner 1978; Nairn 1981), in Scotland the opposite occurred, or rather, the exigencies of the Reformation, to be successful in the Glorious Revolution, meant its success came at the price of Scottish independence. In the case of Scotland modernity has meant the end of Scottish statehood and Scottish nationalism among what Devine (1999) has called "the middling sort" i.e. the nascent bourgeoisie. Certainly Max Weber in his *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1930) was clear that Presbyterian Scotland was a clear example of his thesis of the elective affinity between the rise of Protestantism, the rise of *homo economicus*, and what he termed the "iron cage" of modernity. What the advent of the "iron cage" of industrial modernity has meant in practice locally may be glimpsed from the Rev. Dr. Murray, writing in December 1790 in reply to the question: "What sports have your people?":



Scarcely any after they are grown up. Amongst the infinite advantages of Reformation, this seems to have been one disadvantage attending it that, owing to the gloomy rigour of some of the leading actors, mirth and sport and cheerfulness were decried amongst a people already by nature rather phlegmatic. Since that, mirth and vice have in their apprehension been confounded together...so that the people must either dance by themselves or let it alone.

Is the 1688 Glorious Revolution the "large cultural system" responsible for local history group informants' hostility or indifference to the events of 1999? Is it because my informants are so thoroughly "Protestant" that, as there is an elective affinity between the rise of modernity and the view that what constitutes "reality" and the movement of *modern* history i.e. the values of *homo economicus*, so among such informants the arrival of the Scottish parliament is greeted with concern about its cost, as if confirming the fact that the only "reality" inherited by working class secularised Protestant Scots of the '45 generation to constitute politics by after the Reformation, the union, the Enlightenment and the industrial revolution is the paradigm of *homo economicus* and the functioning of the economy (*vide* Beveridge & Turnbull 1997) ?

If this is an accurate depiction of a definite cultural logic, then it is little wonder that with the "threat" of Scottish independence we have the Orange Order in Scotland threatening "a recourse to arms." It is only because of the persistence of these "large cultural systems" that the consciousness that draws its identity from these cultural logics feels threatened, and can only view the rise and success of Scottish nationalism as the defeat of these large cultural systems and the sources of self-identity contained within them.

*Pace* Nairn's (2000) assertion of the significance of Catholics shifting their electoral allegiance from the unionist Labour Party to the nationalist SNP, a change he describes with the words "'Class' was being transmuted into 'Nation' before our eyes" (2000:

196), what surely requires explanation *vis-a-vis* the rise of Scottish nationality is why working class Protestants are less inclined to vote SNP and vote for independence than the descendants of post-Famine Irish Catholic immigrants (*vide* McCrone & Rosie in Boyle and Lynch 1998). That Scottish Catholics today, overwhelmingly of Irish descent, move to support Scottish independence perhaps is unsurprising given "*The Catholic Irish in Scotland campaigned vigorously for a restoration of an Irish parliament*" (Devine 1999: 490). When interviewing the passkeeper at St. Ninians ("Chum" Wallace) about his views on the Scottish parliament, he began by laughing. Asking why he had laughed he replied:

*Well, isn't it funny? They think they have a parliament. It's fitting that a puppet parliament should be sat in the General Assembly building of the Church of Scotland. One makes it obvious it has no idea how to be a real nation and the other has no idea how to be a real church. They've nae idea of power and nae idea of government. It's a farce.*

A few days before the Holyrood elections the Catholic Bishops Conference issued an electoral address to Scotland's 750,000 Catholics entitled *Make The Cross Count*. This pastoral address was read out at Sunday Masses all over Scotland on May 2nd. Within the national media this document was widely perceived as pro-nationalist and pro-SNP due to its endorsing three of the SNP's key policies on student grants, nuclear weapons and Catholic schools. This pastoral letter came six months after a speech in Brussels by the late Cardinal Winning where he characterised Scottish nationalism as mature, democratic and progressive and in which he welcomed the likelihood of "independence in Europe" in the near future.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps more relevant is that the local Catholics I spoke to in the church hall after this Mass agreed with the accuracy of the pro-SNP interpretation put on the bishops' address.

---

<sup>13</sup> This pro-European stance has recently been emphatically continued by the new Archbishop-elect of Glasgow, Mario Conti, who explicitly drew similarities between "the closed-minded

I do not mean by this, however, to imply a straight equivalence between Scottish Catholicism and *political* nationalism or political unionism and (secularised) working class Protestant identity. The unionist Labour Party still commands widespread support among older working class Catholics. There is little doubt that a perception of Protestant bigotry keeps the political unionism of local Catholics electorally significant, although increasingly, *cultural* unionism and an identification with being 'British' is in freefall. Among local Catholics I found no *positive* identification with Britain but a certain anti-British tradition among them *despite* their support for the Labour Party. Arguably, their political unionism is no substantive value "in itself" but is constructed by a long-standing contestation of Protestant bigotry whereby as soon as the latter is perceived to go, so will the former. I should also make it clear that by "Protestantism" among the local working class, I mean to indicate a secular cultural identity. As a spirituality or theology, Protestantism is at an end among the working class in Cardenden.<sup>14</sup>

### **The Last & First Generation**

Even while sitting among the history group members at their meetings and participating in their discussions, I often viewed my elderly informants, in addition to being the swan song of locality as "occupational community", as being the swan song of "Britain" among the Scottish working class. Today, it is hard to appreciate the Cardenden of a peak population of over 10,000 and the dozens of local clubs and societies which once characterised village life. Whereas Buchan (1994) could cite Rorie's resigning from the twenty-two positions he held on various local committees when leaving Cardenden as symptomatic of a conspicuous local civic culture and an unprecedented production of locality, such "thick" locality is unimaginable today.

---

bigotry" of Protestant sectarianism and "the aggressively anti-European stance adopted by some politicians" (*The Scotsman*, 18 February, 2002).

<sup>14</sup> In December 2001 the Church of Scotland St. Fothads church in Cardenden Road, built in 1910, was demolished. The Baptist church in Derran Drive was also demolished at this time.

The generations that remember the time of the Second World War and know the existential ground of what the expression "Britain's Finest Hour" really means, that had such a strong experience of locality and enduring *communitas* based on their British identity, neither then nor now feel any need to prioritise, far less politicise, their Scottish identity, as they still identify with a period when being British was successful, unproblematic and even triumphalist<sup>15</sup>. It is safe to say there has been a massive decline in identifying oneself as being British when we compare the '45 and the '79 generations (*vide* McCrone 1998: 138-141). The following practice referred to in volume five of *Auchterderran of Yesteryear* is indicative of how much times have changed:

*There were many traditional customs in the local community which have disappeared completely and others which are rarely seen nowadays. One that comes to mind from my youth was the flying of a flag, usually the Union Jack, on a house chimney which was to signify that there was a young man in the house about to be married. The flag was usually erected by one of his workmates and the custom was to reward the person who had scaled the rooftops, secretly and generally at night, with a bottle of whisky.*

At a local event such as an annual dance or any form of communal celebration, the once ubiquitous Union flag<sup>16</sup> bunting has long gone. Looking at old photographs from past local events hanging on the walls in *Bowhill Centre*, it is striking how stark is the contrast with the past where the Union flag, literally, was everywhere. In proportion to the disappearance of the acceptability of the Union flag the Saltire has grown in popularity and legitimacy as a decorative feature to any social or civic occasion. It is a sign of the times then when in 1997 the BBC stopped

---

<sup>15</sup> I remember as a child my paternal uncle Jock, a miner all his working life like his father and grandfather before him, posing to us children the following brainteaser: "*If ye wernae British and ye could pick any other nationality in the world, which wane would ye be?*" The intelligent child of course was expected to answer "British."

<sup>16</sup> During fieldwork I have heard the Union Jack being referred to as "the Butcher's Apron" by SNP voters of the younger '79 generation.

playing *God Save the Queen* at the end of each evening's programming; when watching the evening news programme *Scotland Today* (Tuesday, 9 October 2001) there was an item concerning the Scottish National Party tabling a motion in the Holyrood parliament to have the British flag removed from Edinburgh castle.

In sharp contrast to the '79 generation older inhabitants remember: "In 1953 there were three tellys in Cardenden. One in Mrs Spence's hoose watchin the Stanley Matthews cup final. We aa thought this wis oot e this world." Older informants belong to the last generation that will remember the first time they got into a car; the first time they watched a television or saw the introduction of street lighting; running barefoot during the summer months in the Back Raur; parents hiding the newspaper from the children if it reported a murder. They remember society and locality as the occupational community and a world before the post-war penetration of everyday life by technology and the rise of the consumer society.

Hence the paradox: the members of the local history group seem unable to participate in "1999" because they are unable not to perceive the present as anything other than decline, because they can not move beyond their deeply personal British and unionist assumptions which were part and parcel of a once successful economy, locality and (British) nationality; and insofar as this decline becomes past history via the successful rise of Scottish nationalism, they cannot grasp the present as *their* history.

So strong is their identification with a passed conjunction of locality and nationality that the group members organise time and locality into the following structure: they know the industrial Cardenden as they know themselves. Like the village itself, they have had their youth and maturity when the village was still a substantive industrial coalmining something; in their dotage they see the subsequent post-industrial decline but it does not affect their identity, as if its significance for identity is finished

because deindustrialisation means locality and Cardenden also is "finished." They have no categories to construct any serious engagement with the present meaning of Scottish and local history, as if their periodisation of their identity has become both a paradigm and prison; as if the categories history gave them with which to conceive meaning and identity, a subsequent history i.e. deindustrialisation and 1 July 1999, has taken away.

As retired locals themselves, their experience of Cardenden and Britain is likewise being "retired" so they experience the present, not as history, but as "surplus time" and so constitute a "backward glance" that feels the need to codify for themselves a "heritage" that is being lost; which is why they constitute themselves as a local history group in their retirement.

The '45 generation may be viewed as the purest (because they are the last) expression of a "materialist and unionist paradigm" that even when free of an obvious economic necessity can remain satisfied in only having taken the first steps in the project of reflexive self-consciousness. A prior economic hardship or "discourse of poverty" justifies even in retirement when financially comfortable, a "poverty of discourse" still incapable of a "post-materialist" meaning, a post-materialist reflexive look over history that cannot become systematic and self-conscious among them.

In current characterisations of society such as found in Giddens' *Modernity and Self-Identity* (1991) it is asserted there exists a "modern self" divided between "social role" and "private self." Related to this condition is the thesis whereby, because the narrative meaning given to nations are "deconstructed" and shown to be invented myth (Hobsbawm and Ranger; 1986), the narrative meanings given to individual lives by society and national or even "royal" historiography, modern reflexivity will similarly 'deconstruct' in conditions of risk (Beck 1992). The view of "high modernity" argues such practices of critique of reality, self and nation are becoming our general condition because we late moderns are



in possession of reflexive selves that free us from self-identification with such traditional accidents of birth such as social class or nation-state.

Among older informants I found no trace whatever of any agonistic searching for a true self negotiating its way through risk society. It is among the '79 generation that the characterisation of society by Giddens is relevant as it points to the continuing emergence of structured working class subjectivity from "mystifying" interpolations, especially since the nineteen-sixties, as relevant to explaining the decline of British identity and the up-take of Scottish identity among the '79 generation. However, "individualism" and the rise of the affluent society, coupled with a freedom from erstwhile dominant cultural mores, has aided and abetted a "politics of identity" becoming possible.

When theorists or class or nationalism fail to conceive the reality of class or nation structurally they are prone to representing working class lives as particularly prone to being duped into irrational loyalties; as if the nation and class are fictions the working class identify with because they lack the symbolic capital or social distinction to develop an identity and self-understanding outwith their allocated 'social role'; as if the working class are the last class able to appropriate the "post-substance" identity paradigm of contemporary theory and so are routinely judged by modernist sociology as belonging to a generation that orders its knowledge and political mobilisation via obsolete categories of community. Such theories tend to deploy assumptions relevant for the middle classes ability to produce substantivity, i.e. the ability to constitute and follow the cultural fashions charted by Giddens (1991). Despite affluence and an emergent individualism, working class subjectivity remains structurally constituted among the '79 generation. In this generation, being post-British and constituting class in a post-materialist fashion and politics via Scottish nationality does not imply embourgeoisement or becoming less working class.

I argue there is a structural conception of "personal" authenticity that is able to survive the deconstructionist techniques as applied to the nation and the nationalised self, so that the critique of tartanry and such representations of Scottish culture and identity that are allegedly capable of "deconstructing" Scottish nationalism in fact are misrecognitions of working class structuration. Having sat in Bowhill Park on many Thursday evenings during the summer months listening to the local pipe band practising, with many wearing the tartan, the idea that this is supposed to strike the ethnographer as "invented tradition" and somehow false (*vide* Briggs 1996) is unconvincing.

It is banal thinking indeed that even imagines that the alleged recent coinage of tartanry and the short kilt, for example, is at all relevant. *Pace* Renan's famous dictum, the fact that so many nations get their history "wrong", and Karl Deutsch can remark that a nation is "a group of persons united by a common error about their ancestry" (1969: 3) should be the clue to the fact that "history" does not matter; that what matters is structure i.e. the present relevant and contested relations that social actors are engaged in contesting. That the "actors" involved may "dress up"<sup>17</sup> the present in false period costume is beside the point. Simply because social actors dress structural realities in substantive period costume, certain social analysts make the mistake of believing that in critiquing the costume they are critiquing the social cause under investigation. In this they in fact attack misrecognised "things" i.e. misconceive the reality of reality, and impute to their insights a deconstructive power they do not possess.

Looking at old black and white photographs of one of the local pipe bands playing in Moscow at the invitation of the Soviet Union, it is clear that national and class realities have worked hand in hand in the activities of the *Friends of the Soviet Union* societies that proliferated in

---

<sup>17</sup> Hobsbawm and Ranger claim the short kilt as a 19th century invention yet historian Michael Lynch writes: "A cult of 'tartanry' at the royal court briefly flowered in the 1680s" (1992: 299). When does a tradition become authentic?

Fife after 1917. Is this appropriation of national identity fake? What exactly is the model of authenticity or real tradition that deconstruction theorists hold if not a pre-structuralist naivety regarding the nature of social reality in general and working class reality in particular?

In contrast to much of the direction of Giddens's argument I argue that just as a certain persistent integralism of class, (British) nation, locality and generational identity among the '45 generation effectively alienates them from 1999, so class and national identity within the '79 generation, far from being discarded via the "disembedding mechanisms" of high modernity, such mechanisms (affluence and individualism etc.) in fact help emerge these same categories of (Scottish) nationality and class which locals deploy to construct the emergent reflexive project of working class nationalism.

It seems that the underlying cause of post-structuralist claims and the fashion of deconstruction is a reaction in the order of intellectual representation to the general emergence at the cultural and political (i.e. superstructural) level of the underlying structures of reality i.e. contesting classes, nations, ethnicities and histories that have "always" been present. With the post-colonial order and the end of universalist Enlightenment fictions a healthy plurality is finally emerging i.e. a species of "medieval particularism," the historic Other of Enlightenment modernity, as the new post-modern condition.

The belief that since the nineteen fifties and sixties we have been "freed" from social structure, and we are moving towards the "classless society," and that this now constitutes the popular cultural condition, is misconceived but not wholly inaccurate. Thanks to the welfare state and an undeniable rise in material affluence, there has occurred a freedom from a prior superstructural / cultural realm. It is based on this that the '79 generation have become free (behaviourally as well as materially) from a traditional working class structuration and certain traditional identities instantiated by the '45 generation.

The nineteen-sixties are so iconic to popular Western culture because they function as our origin myth; as if the Enlightenment paradigm of the elite has (finally, after innumerable still births) been sold to the working class via technology and the rise of mass communication, the rise of affluence and mass society and the commodification via technologisation of social relations. If one could characterise modernity or the Reformation / Enlightenment paradigm as one long time-delayed intellectual "joke," it is only in the nineteen-sixties that the punchline (the economic ability to become free of tradition) was delivered and packaged to the working class. Far from characterising the Enlightenment project collapsing into debates on the end of the subject or author, the end of structure, or whether the concept of society is theoretically obsolete, I characterise the emerging condition among the working class as a favourable "springtime of structure" of freedom from erstwhile universalist ideological mystifications (including of course the Enlightenment paradigm itself).

With this real advance in freedom comes 'enslaving' possibilities, even probabilities, that reveal as never before the poverty of cultural aspiration and achievement among the working class and their vulnerability to new cultural interpolations by the continued control of public space by the middle class. It also, however, though only as an emergent possibility, allows the long-delayed working class critique of Anglo-Scottish or British modernity among the '79 generation.<sup>18</sup> This is new and significant.

However, it has to be continually stressed that this development of freedom remains dialectical. While via their parents the '79 generation are heirs to localities and a *culture* betraying a prior material scarcity, the enduring structural facts of life mean they remain prone to living in the

---

<sup>18</sup> An emergent working class critique of modernism is one of the most promising themes to emerge from fieldwork. However, following my own advice, i.e. that an ethnography of the working class must confine itself to structuralist facts, this substantive theme would need to be developed outwith an ethnographic monograph.

"dependency culture"<sup>19</sup> if they fail to find regular employment (*vide* Palm 1977). But their dependency is also cultural as they often have little cultural capital to develop the undeniable freedoms their generation have "objectively" inherited. What is tragic for the young unemployed is that they instantiate a radical cultural poverty. What is tragic to view is working class youth who are alienated from the structuration of work and so are incapable of resisting cultural "interpolation"; an interpolation they can only "develop" by a crude hedonism because they lack the cultural and financial resources to participate in what Giddens himself has characterised as an essentially middle class project.

On the whole, despite Wilma's comments quoted earlier, the '45 generation "pursue" a caesura in the experience of time which means an inability to explain the present and a sincere resort to "magical" explanations such as Mel Gibson's *Braveheart* when asked to explain the reasons behind the creation of the Scottish parliament. Constituting this inter-generational perspective is the problematic the '79 generation faces. Paradoxically, now that affluence has meant the working class can finally begin to systematically turn their attention towards the "superstructure," when elements of superstructure such as family, religion, marriage, local society and authority etc. are in freefall among the '79 generation, when there is the opportunity for this "generational identity" and its historic tasks to emerge "in itself," far from finally constituting and representing itself, working class culture *collapses*. Only now do we see it is incapable of producing anything, least of all "itself," precisely *because* it is freer than ever before to do so. What is revealed is a profound cultural poverty but at the same time a profound cultural logic and lesson in working class structuration. Only with the rise of the

---

<sup>19</sup> At Christmas midnight Mass (2001) Fr. Heenan told the following joke. An Irish cripple went into a pub and asked the barman for a pint of Guinness. Taking a sip, he had a look around the pub and then asked the barman: "*Is that Jesus o'er there?*" The barman said "*Aye*" so the Irishman said, "*Gie him a pint e Guinness*". Next, a lame Scotsman walked in and ordered a pint of special. Taking a sip, he too had a look round the pub and asked the barman: "*Is that Jesus o'er there?*". The barman gave the same reply as before, so the Scotsman said "*Gie him a pint e special*". Having finished his drinks, Jesus walked over to the Irishman and said "*Rise up my son and walk!*" at which the Irishman was healed and danced a jig at being cured. Jesus then walked over to the Scotsman, but before he could do anything, the Scotsman said: "*That's far enough. Ah'm on invalidity*".



affluent worker does this cultural poverty reveal itself as a connecting bridge between the generations despite the obvious social and cultural changes separating them.

The '79 generation is being forced by de-industrialisation and the caesura between social structure and culture, that began to emerge in the fifties and sixties, to bring to consciousness that which in the '45 generation could remain unconscious structure; and it is this unique challenge which reveals the poverty of prior generations because de-industrialisation and the collapse of ideological universalisms requires that working class "culture" stand alone as a substantive something, and is therefore shown to be incapable even of articulating itself, far less competing against other hegemonic producers of culture.

Because of their generation-specific structuration the history group members are determined to pursue their caesura and are complacent in this. Paradoxically, it is only because of the resumption of history that one can describe them as "the last generation;" the swan song of working class unionism in Scotland and describe their meetings as taking place in the shadow of Minerva's owl where it is working class nationalism, which they dismiss, which is making them obsolete but also accords them a sociological and historical significance. Their incredulity to current nationalism is an example of their general alienation from history itself becoming an historical event.

As of April 2001 the afternoon history group had effectively ended. When I asked why I was told it was due to "a lack of numbers"; that people were getting too old and were not being replaced. Only the evening group (which since April 2001 is permanently without a tutor) survive, and without any pretence at studying history. When first being drafted this chapter's thesis that in the history group, as with the *Mining Archives*, another lengthy backward glance had failed, now appears obvious. The cultural logic of the '45 generation is at an end. The working class of an older generation stand as a permanent critique of any future



naturalisation of nationalism. While 1 July 1999 is represented as the culminating point of a historical process, the history group members witness to the caesura that 1 July 1999 is in *their* history, which is hardly surprising as they are the end product of generations of a depoliticised national identity never to be repeated as of 1 July 1999.

In the next chapter I resume discussion of the “integral self” upon which has been erected a canon of “authenticity” that is being cultivated and deployed via an emergent nationalist project among the '79 generation in particular. I outline the new emergent “class and nation” integralism of the '79 generation that is the structural reality underpinning working class nationalism in Scotland today.

## Working Class Nationalism

*It seems tae hae been oor generation that started it and they're gonnae finish it off. Ma mum an that, she thinks we should get it [independence] noo, bit when Ah wis growin up she jist voted Labour. Whereas noo they see us, me an aa ma mates vote SNP so we're startin it. We've got the parliament and the ones that are growin up they'll hear it mair fae us than we did fae oor mum and dad, so they're gonnae pick up on it.*

Steven Haggart  
38 Muirtonhill Road  
July 25th 1999

On 1 July 1999 a world of Scottish nationalism previously confined largely to an intentional existence became physically and permanently institutionalised at the heart of Scottish life; in fact was largely responsible for rescuing the reality of "Scottish politics" from the pre-devolution Scottish Office invisibility in which it had languished. As *The Herald* newspaper headline (Friday 7 May) put it: "Died 1707 ... Born 1999."

To understand this event as "history" I have attempted to "arm" the reader with an appreciation of the background structuration of locals so that they may see beyond the transcribed discourse of locals to an appreciation of the structural logic that is working class nationalism.

Before turning therefore to the event of 1 July 1999 directly, I have had to spend four chapters explicating aspects of the "natural laws" of class.

However, this spectacular inaugurating power of nationalism also serves to highlight as never before the deep-rooted and essentially non-nationalist dispositions of locals. With only 60% of the Scottish electorate bothering to vote in the September 1997 Referendum for a Scottish parliament, I regard 1 July 1999 and the working class nationalism that produced it as something of a "miracle" event. While an essentially British and unionist cultural logic has come to an end, the fact remains that Home Rule is not the independence the nationalist seeks and an essentially British and unionist "social mindscape" (Zerubavel 1997) remains pervasive.

During the Sunday quiz at *The Auld Man's Shelter* (December 2001), one of the questions is to name the first "foreign manager to win the F.A. cup". Among the card school team there is confusion as to what is meant by "foreign". "Does that include Scottish managers?" asks Brian. The compere shows annoyance at this unwelcome question, and replies by equating foreign with "non-British."

### **5.1 The Pantomime Goes On**

One of the last ethnographic scenes towards the end of fieldwork was the Christmas 2000 pantomime at *Bowhill Centre*<sup>1</sup> (Friday 8th December) put on by the touring theatre group *M & M Theatrical Productions* (Ayr) performing an in-house production of Victor Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. The pantomime was a great success, an all-ticket event and, unlike previous attempts at constituting an audience as in the *Fun Day* (chapter one), the overwhelming majority of the audience were enthusiastic youngsters of primary school age. The villain of the piece was excellent and the children quickly learned to boo and hiss his every entrance and exit. In perfect contrast was the heroine Esmerelda; a poor

good-natured street-seller whom the villain blackmails into agreeing to marry him; thereby thwarting the happiness of the deformed hero Quasimodo who has fallen in love with the beautiful Esmerelda. There was plenty of audience participation throughout in the form of singing along with the actors to current pop songs cleverly inserted into the storyline. At the final scene about a hundred youngsters were out of their seats dancing and singing in front of the stage to the song "Reach for the Sky" by *S Club Seven*.

While the pantomime was unambiguously and successfully aimed at children, there was also being performed, if only for the ethnographer of working class nationalism out for an evening's entertainment with his family, an allegory of nationality.

The priest character of Notre Dame was portrayed as an asexual effeminate caricature in exaggerated Irish accent along with near-hysterical mannerisms; an instantly recognisable Anglo-Scottish construction of the Irish as "Daft Paddy," i.e. a concoction of harmless stupidity combined with that internalisation of powerlessness that can produce the obedience of a "Graeme Norton" caricature, perfectly happy to play the poodle to entertain "the Brits." However, the starring role of the British national "pet" was played by the only animalised character in the cast, a crocodile named "Jock" i.e. Jock the Croc, whose role it was to provide comic relief. It was only some minutes into the pantomime that I realised the character was called Jock, and that the actor underneath the costume was attempting a Glaswegian accent. I suddenly realised I was in for a live performance of what Kravitz's (1997) has named the "*subaltern Scot*"; in fact a variation of Žižek's (2000) reading of the *Jar Jar* character in his reading of George Lucas's *The Phantom Menace* (1998) where "dehumanisation" of a national group is achieved via "animalisation."

---

<sup>1</sup> Known until 1992 as the *Miners' Welfare Institute*.

A Christmas pantomime suddenly became an allegory of Britain where Hechter's Celtic fringe was reduced to comic relief and the weight of narration becomes "England's" burden. There was an obvious analogy being performed between plot and history and characterisation and nationality.

In this wonderland everyone was happy with their allotted place: the Irish "poof" abroad is given his post-colonial starring role where he may "be himself" i.e. his sexuality, thanks to Anglo-Scottish secular modernity (as opposed to medieval Catholic Ireland) and "the English" and "Scottish" can reproduce their imperial selves by the theatrical reproduction of their imperialism over Ireland guilt-free thanks to the priest character not being invested with sufficient intelligence to understand his exploitation by the, one is forced to nationalise and name him as, *English* protagonist, who authors the plot around the unsuspecting Daft Paddy.

The above interpretation is entirely my own. Having spoken to the proud creator of "Jock the Croc" at *M & M Theatrical Productions* I have no doubt she would be offended by my wilful mis-representation. Certainly my Andalucian wife saw no such performance of what Tom Nairn in another context has named "the mystery play of Britishness" (2000). What is significant is that the public performance of a level of "unconsciousness," that took a pantomime animalisation of the subaltern Scot on tour in Scotland after 1 July 1999, was *Scottish*. The theatre company that produced the pantomime is Scottish and it was one of its employees (Margaret Gary) who invented Jock the Croc; as if evidencing that the Scots themselves have internalised a "colonised" view of themselves.

What is significant is that for my reading of the pantomime to be credible it relies upon accurately tracing the contours of an other's unconsciousness; that my counter-reading consists of bringing to consciousness the unconsciousness of an other. My reading of the

subaltern Scot motif does not exist "in the text" itself, nor I believe in the consciousness of the text's author, and I am doubtful that any adult in the audience other than myself read it the same way. How then did my reading of the pantomime literally take a few seconds to "construct itself"? Clearly, it was because my schemes of perception were already attuned to issues of representation and nationality.

I recall the pantomime then to make the point that no explanation of Scottish nationalism is complete that does not advert to the importance of Scottish representations of Scotland, England or Britain. Other examples of how national identity influence schemes of perception, and thereby produce dialectically opposed readings of events (whether a Christmas pantomime or the creation of a new parliament), were evidenced in the following two interviews with two English locals. Having previously talked to Mr Sims' wife I began by asking what he thought of the Scottish parliament:

They're a bunch e bloody hypocrites, that's what they are.

*What do you mean? Your wife is worried it could become another Northern Ireland in twenty-five years.*

Oh Ah've said that all along.

*Do you think it's divisive this Scottish parliament?*

Of course it is, of course it is. It'll be another Northern Ireland, bound to be! You've only to hear them talking in the parliament, Scottish Nationalists talkin, Ah mean they've only one idea! And then just look at what's happenin down England now...Ah mean they've got peace in Northern Ireland which is a good thing, they've got a sort of peace in Northern Ireland but at what expense? The governments said oh we'll never negotiate with the IRA when they've got guns and now they're invitin them into parliament, give them an office which again is gonna cost the tax payer millions of pounds over a few years. To keep them there. And what will they do? They'll invite all their pals an sit an discuss it all in our parliament.

*Where did this parliament come from? Who wanted it and why?*



It's these...it comes about because of these pressure groups, that's why. Ah mean just look at the people that they put in the parliament, this clown from Glasgow's put in the parliament...

*Donald Dewar?*

Aye. Ah mean all people that have been activists in one field or another, they've nae knowledge of the subject which they've taken...Ah mean ye've only to look back in their history. They need knowledge to do what they do!

*Do you think it's not so much people that are wanting it but that the political chattering classes that for whatever reason...*

They're just a talkin shop and it'll just run itself into the ground, of course it will. That's the unfortunate part about it, it's gonnae cost. Ah mean the amount of deceit they've put out since they moved in there's amazin. Ah mean there's one that's shown up the now Hampden Park. That's one. Now there's another one that's gonnae show up in a couple of years time: the cost of building this parliament.

*You're wife said to me you're an Englishman.*

Aye.

*Do you feel as if because this parliament has been created that somehow it has put you in an uncomfortable position?*

No it doesnae, but as I say my family will see it. And Ah mean you only have to go up round about where the SNP are really...shall we say...got the swing, up round the north east coast area, that type e thing, to see all the anti-English slogans that are already there. They're already there! Ah mean that's where it all stems from.

*In the elections to the Scottish parliament did you bother voting?*

Oh I voted!

*Who did you vote for because all of the parties were more or less in favour of the parliament so you'd be stuck wouldn't you?*

I was in a way. See now these people in the parliament they're not people we elected. They're people that the parties wanted in.

*Who did ye vote for?*

The Conservatives.

*Was that the lesser of the evils?*

Of course it was. Of course it was. No doubt at all about that. Ah mean Ah've lived up here now for fifty odd years...Ah've no complaints about the people about here, Ah mean I get on well

with them all, all the people down in the village and they get on well with me. Ah've no complaints about them. An that's been goin on for fifty odd years.

*So why do you think it's come about just now? Ah mean is there somethin different from before?*

Oh aye, its come about cause the nationalists have spent a tremendous amount of money. And they've brought in people that are, shall we say, high profile, the likes of this clown that they've got...

*Salmond?*

No. That actor boy who doesn't live in the country.

*Sean Connery?*

Aye! People of that caliber walkin in...shall we say a figurehead. And they've used them. That's why they've gained so much. Perhaps of course also the Conservatives made such a blasted mess of it in the last couple of years. Ah mean that gave them a start. The Labour government initially in Scotland is an utter disgrace...Ah mean the chicanery that went on. Ah mean I was a representative for the union, for the management of the coal board. And we used to go to Labour Party conferences and that because the union were part of Labour sort of thing like ye ken.

*Were you in the coalmines?*

Ah started at Comrie and then Ah came here. Ah was a chief engineer at Seafield Colliery in Kirkcaldy till I retired. Bit Ah mean Ah saw what went on at those conferences... An it's even worse now under this Blair because he's dictatin now in the Labour party.

*Aye he's got them on a tight leash.*

Ah'll tell ye somethin. I seen the same thing when I was a youngster. That's how it started in Germany. The very same thing! A wee bit here an a wee bit there. And then they started all these youth things, got the youth on their side. Exactly what Blair's doin. Now that's how it all started in Germany. And that's in my time. Ah saw it all. And ye ken what happened in the end.

Philip Sims  
10 Lady Helen Cottages

Living next door to Mr Sims was the English owner of a local business. Again, I began by asking his views on the recently established Scottish parliament:

Personally, it doesn't really affect us in any way whatsoever. Having a Scottish parliament is rather like joining a trade union, it's just somebody else to tell us what to do. You know, the fewer people telling us what to do the better as far as I'm concerned so basically...I think it really has no effect whatsoever on me personally bit eh...Ah feel for a lot of people yes it could do because it's somebody else to tell them what to do.

*Why do you think it is we have this parliament now? Is there anything in particular we can point to?*

I think anything...the Scots are a funny race. Very strange race. We'll bleet and bleet and bleet about something, we'll want it and want it and want it and when we've got it we'll totally ignore it.

*That is a bit of a paradox.*

That's what the Scots are like. You know once they've got something oh that's it we've got it now we can forget about it. And just get on with it, we'll go an make some soup, you know! Let's face it, I don't think the parliament will be used, respected, referred to, as much as everyone thought it was going to be.

*Why will an initial enthusiasm die?*

I think the Scots as a nation are quite an aggressive mob and want to fight for something all the time. They've got to be fighting. Scots love being underdogs. They like being oh way down there. They like to be able to fight and struggle and, of course, ma dad did it and ma grandfather did it, and it all happened in years gone by and so the only way to beat the system is tae eh...tae fight! And oh, the Scottish parliament that's a great idea! Ah'll fight for that! Ah'll shout about it and Ah'll go fir it alright and then when it comes, oh that's it, Ah've done that! Ah'm still the underdog!

*So you think it's like some collective chip on the shoulder?*

Yeah Ah think there's an inferiority complex through the nation...personally anyway. Having been born in England, lived most of my life in Scotland, some of ma life in England, Ah've

been all round the counties in England, so Ah've actually seen the way certain parts of England treat themselves, you know, and Scots have definitely got this inferiority complex. They've got this attitude of being an underdog. Ah think the English tend to look forward more, the Scots live in the past. The English tend to go forward.

*Where has this parliament come from?*

The idea of the Scottish parliament is very good. We had the Tory government for nearly twenty years, you know, and for the Scots, Labour was the main...this was a very good idea to have their Labour, their own personal government you know doing things for them. That's fine. At the end of the day it can't be nothing more than a huge expense to us all. Really.

*Do you think the Labour party has been coerced into this whole...*

Basically. Because the seed was sown. They couldn't turn their back on it.

*So you think it was a disenchantment with the Thatcher years an that the Labour Party had to be seen to be doing something?*

Yeah. Ah think that's how the Scottish parliament came to be...it's just in case the Conservatives got in again. And it would be the Labour stronghold which central Scotland is and always will be...it's the usual joke, if an ape was standing for Labour he'd be voted in. It's a traditional vote, it was wanting to be represented which Ah don't think a lot of Scots felt they were being represented for many many years of Conservative government.

*What of the future? Your neighbour Mr Sims is quite fearful we're gonnae end up like Northern Ireland in twenty-five years. What do you think of the future? Is it gonnae be better or worse or will things tick over?*

Ah don't know. It's so difficult to say. Ah think the Scottish parliament is going to be a fairly weak affair in the future. It's gonnae be a fairly spineless body. It's not gonnae have the representation people thought it would have. Especially if it finds it has to raise taxes, in order to survive. It's gonnae cost an awful lot of money this and its got to come from somewhere. It's only ten percent of people that are Scottish and really that's an awful lot of money that has to come from each individual person to support the very expensive parliament.

*Do you think if people realise their parliament is only a talkin shop they are gonnae want more powers or do you think it will end up a glorified council?*

The Scottish parliament won't exist. It'll be got rid off as soon as Conservatives run the Scottish parliament.

*Do you think they will get rid of it?*

*If Labour runs England, if it swaps round, nobody in central Scotland will want the Scottish parliament; they'll want rid of it. Ah really think that's the whole cause of it in the first place...*

*What do you think about the idea prior to the election that a Scottish parliament will lead to independence? Do you think that was just a scare tactic or do people actually believe that?*

It possibly could. You see it's still something for people to fight for. And it's still this chip on the shoulder thing. And there's still a lot of people that'll feel underdogs and 'Scotland's no independent yet' [in Scottish accent]. They tried to do it with the oil thing but they've kind of wound down on the oil thing cause it's nearly all American money in the oil thing anyway so you know they've found out well we can't really go shouting its Scotland's oil anymore. Now they're going for independence more. I don't know...Ever since I moved up to Scotland twenty...Ah was about thirteen and I noticed this attitude immediately, this underdog, this fight for independence, Ah was English, Ah was a Yorkshire man then you know...

*In the elections to the Scottish parliament did ye bother voting, did ye think it was worthwhile?*

I did yes.

*Do you mind if I ask...*

I voted Conservative; mainly because it's not voting Labour. To me to vote anything but Labour in Fife. Just to get new blood, new people in.

These two locals were the only Tory voters I encountered during fieldwork and I suggest the hypothesis that both being English<sup>2</sup> is not unrelated either to their analysis of 1 July 1999 or their voting

---

<sup>2</sup> The only other Englishman interviewed (Stephen Robins, 24 Orebank Road) advised "Ah voted once in ma entire life so far and that was for Screaming Lord Sutch, Monster Raving Looney party when Ah stayed in England. The one day



preferences. Lacking identities of being native, working class or Scottish (*"it's only ten per cent of people that are Scottish"*), the interviews evidence a clear inability on the part of the interviewees to identify in any real sense with the events of 1 July 1999.

For most locals, however, voting Conservative was simply not an option no matter how much they may dislike New Labour. If they do not vote Labour they vote SNP or do not vote at all. While many locals are "unionists" by default, this is not politicised at the ballot box in votes for the Conservative and Unionist Party as this would involve negating a far stronger class identity. Defending the unionism of the *status quo ante* becomes something of a pariah political option so that at the Holyrood elections in May 1999, essentially non-nationalist locals will "go with the flow" i.e. vote Labour rather than vote Tory.

## **5.2 Unionism: The Spectre of Comparison With England**

Let's be honest, some of us hoped that we would never see this day.

David McLetchie  
Conservative MSP  
12 May 1999

The methodological implications for the ethnographer intent on constructing a "native point of view" that has a class and national identity component clearly must advert to other equally integral elements, such as gender and age etc. This integral structuration of self is also in relationship to other classes and other national identities. There is no Scottish working class identity that is not aware of "rival" and competing identities such as those of the middle class and England, so that each particular individual's construction of their identity borrows from different identities the sense of reality and credibility of their own. Put

---

working week, that'd do me fine. And free national drink. At that time that was his policy...But Ah mean politicians just annoy me."



simply, we see what others do with their own identities before deciding on what to do with our own.

Throughout fieldwork, unionism as *ideology*, was only articulated and defended by one young informant (Brian Wilson, 26 Woodend Park) as follows:

*Ah'm no fir nationalism or that. Ah'm pretty much up fir the unionism eh? They're watchin Braveheart an aa that shite eh an they think aye that's the way tae go. Naebody's interested in it eh? It's jist eh...go wi the flow eh? What's in the papers, what's oan the telly eh? Ken, they'll go wi that. Ah think everybody wants it [independence] bit it's fir the rang reasons eh? Ken what Ah mean? They jist want it fir the sake e it. Ah dinnae see any reasons fir it. Ah dinnae see any point in it; we're jist a wee country eh?*

The fundamental criticism of Brian is that because “everybody” has been “interpolated” by the media, he remains sceptical regarding the quality of the motives of those who want independence. He believes they are “going with the flow,” and that the flow is being authored elsewhere. Having talked in chapter two about an intentional horizon constituted and confined by a financial and social precariousness, it is no cause for wonder that credible reasons to involve oneself imaginatively in the political destinies of nations are hard to come by. This feature of the ‘personal’ is mirrored at the national level where the question of the financial feasibility of Scottish independence emerged as a clear class-based impetus for remaining within the political union with England.

On a Friday evening (4th February 1999) when chatting with a couple to arrange an interview, the main BBC evening news programme, *Reporting Scotland* was on the television. There was a report covering the (then) leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (Paddy Ashdown) in Aberdeen, followed by coverage of a visit to Glasgow by Prime Minister Blair who was shown criticising the Scottish nationalists in a speech.

Next, along side Donald Dewar, the Prime Minister is shown unveiling a billboard poster warning against the dangers of "Divorce" i.e. the separation of Scotland from England. At this, the couple began an exchange critical of Scottish independence and voiced their worries about pensions and defence. "We want oor pensions..." the woman told me, smiling rather self-consciously, before adding, "Ah'm aa fir mair say in oor ain affairs bit Ah'm no fir this total...". Before she can finish, her husband asked rhetorically: "What about defence? What about some Arab rogue eejit?" before adding, "Whose gonnae pay fir it aa?"

The launch in September 1972 of the SNP's campaign, *It's Scotland's Oil*, was to prove electorally successful in 1974 because of the financial credibility it gave to the idea of Scottish independence. For many locals the role of finance and the reduced tax-base of an independent Scotland was the most frequently cited criteria in deciding how they felt about independence. *Pace* Nairn's (1981) identifying the importance of British economic decline in explaining the rise of Scottish nationalism, I cannot think of one occasion when interviewing locals where Scotland was judged poorer than England *because of* three centuries of union. By far the clear opinion is that England is the richer country, so that the idea that "culture" can contest and define "economic reality", does not square with the views of locals. It seems the "ninety minute nationalism" of football supporters costs nothing, whereas the real nationalism of "independence in Europe" is a price and politicisation of national identity too far.

From one street I reproduce excerpts from two locals who expressed doubts about the financial feasibility of an independent Scotland and, as a direct consequence, the credibility of Scottish nationalism, due to a lack of material wealth:

Well I know people's campaigned a lot and Ah wanted to see it myself; Ah wanted to see

Scotland make its own decisions but you know you don't go over the top because money's got to be found for this. Ah mean this'll change everyone's mind and they'll want it reversing like a lot of African countries want it reversin because they can't find the capital.

Mr Hindley  
76 Orebank Road

At the moment Ah think we cannae really live withoot England. Ah honestly think that aa big business really comes through England Ah believe. Ah know we've oil an aa that bit...nah! Ah think aa the big business runs through England, and we have tae live that way. Ah really think that's the case.

*If we did have enough money d'ye think independence could be a guid idea?*

Aye, cause there is ither wee countries in Europe that show us the way; if we could follow. People are faired Ah think. Better the Devil ye ken. Scared. People are scared. It's a'right fir Sean Connery an aa the likes e that sayin aye come oan let's dae it. He could get oot any time he likes. Bit fir the ordinary guy on the street it's no as easy as that.

Mr Carswell  
58 Orebank Road

Underpinning political unionism as evidenced by the local postman quoted above is this strong assertion of economic realities that necessitates a necessary restraint. Locals' views on Anglo-Scottish relations cast Scotland into the role of the main economic beneficiary through political union so that informants dare not attempt independence because of a judgement on "economic reality" i.e. the relative poverty of Scotland *vis-a-vis* England, so that just as a class they can not afford the experiment of socialism, so as a people they can not afford the experiment of independence no matter how desirable socialism or independence may be *in theory*. This, I suggest, is a clear mapping of the disjuncture between social structure and culture; or the

disjuncture between the "head and the heart" as Catherine described it in chapter one. But this disjuncture is nevertheless mapped differently across the generations.

The idea that what the "integral self" desires (whether socialism or independence) but material necessity / social structure dictates as unrealistic, is familiar to any working class generation. But the cultural level among the '45 generation included a British identity and culture that meant Scottish nationality played little significant part in constituting the cultural pole of the disjuncture between social structure and culture / ideology. However, among the '79 generation, the disjuncture has been qualitatively transformed (thanks to the welfare state, the affluent society and the cultural "revolution" of the fifties and sixties) so that increasingly a cultural logic is constituted via Scottish nationality; has been able to afford to jettison "Britain" at the cultural level, to form a qualitatively new disjuncture between social structure and culture whereby unionism can only be constituted by reference to structure *only* i.e. to an alleged Scottish "poverty" *vis-a-vis* England.

Among the '45 generation there is the clear victory for the view that it is the economy and a political position based on this economic reality that determines the political rationality of unionism. However, even among the '45 generation, the fact that informants cite fears over the economy as the only Achilles heel of their nationalist aspirations, evidences the increasing emergence of Scottish nationality into the realm of politics even among the '45 generation. If the exigencies of the dismal science are the only reasons left to tolerate the union, then a rise in affluence could only result in the problematising of the union especially among a generation habituated to a post-materialist logic and who are dispositive to and able to afford a politics of national identity. This I believe is what has happened and what explains the nationalism of the '79 generation.

If the only credible reason left for unionism is an increase in material prosperity, then even unionist informants seem to accept the union must

logically come to an end when (and it can only be a matter of time for them) the union produces the affluence they claim the union provides and they seek. It is significant that unionism is rarely, if ever, defended in terms of culture. This also explains why the unionist political parties are almost "forced" to cultivate a perception of Scotland's relative economic poverty *vis-a-vis* England to prevent Scots voting for the SNP.

As part of the Labour Party's Holyrood general election campaign, the Scottish treasury minister Alastair Darling MP at a press conference (24 April 1999), carried by both evening news programmes, advised there would be a two hundred million pound National Insurance contribution deficit should Scotland become independent. The message is clear: the Scots cannot afford independence; an independent Scotland means pensions less than the £67 per week under New Labour and, given the quote earlier ("We want oor pensions!") this message gets across.

### **5.3 Scottish Nationalism: Bourgeois Norm or Working Class Miracle?**

To further contextualise the broader context of Scottish nationalism I highlight some recent defining moments, what Venna Das (1995) has termed "critical events" i.e. the 1992 British general election, the issue of the "Scottish Six" and media coverage of the Holyrood election in May 1999 which may be useful in making visible normally unseen aspects of national and cultural structuration.

#### **1992 General Election**

I recall the morning of 10th April, the day after the 1992 British general election. Coming downstairs rather bleary-eyed from having been up late the previous evening, I found my father sitting with cup of tea in hand watching television before heading off to work. Having gone to bed without knowing the outcome of the election I asked "*Who won then?*" As soon as the words were spoken, it was obvious from the television

pictures the Conservatives had won their fourth consecutive general election. I let my question hang in the air, deliberately waiting for my father, a committed Labour voter all his life, to say something. Finally, he said: "*Makes ye wonder why ye bother votin at aa.*"

On that particular morning it seemed the suspicion that participation in politics was becoming 'absurd' achieved the status of a self-evident principle. Such was the sense of widespread disappointment in Scotland, the then journalist (now BBC political editor) Andrew Marr mused:

Just conceivably 1992 was the end of Scottish politics as a tale in its own right.

(in Harvie 1998: 238-9).

I argue that the political union of Scotland and England has become problematic because of class-based differences between a Labour-voting electorate in Scotland and a Conservative-voting electorate in England. The shift from Labour to the SNP was an effort to bring a halt to the sense of a lack of representation or mis-representation by re-constituting political representation on a *Scottish* basis. Voting Labour as a politicised expression of being working class was ineffective and incapable of producing "representation" because the vastly more numerous English electorate voted for and got a Conservative government. To make being working class politically efficacious meant re-constituting the political playing field.

In terms of elected members of parliament, the Labour Party's 1992 General Election campaign was a spectacular success in Scotland, yet the (then) Labour Party leader (Neil Kinnock), after congratulating the Scottish Labour Party members and voters on their success, immediately resigned to be replaced by John Smith. Already in 1987, the Labour Party's record number of Scottish members of parliament were labelled



"the feeble fifty"<sup>3</sup> by the (then) leader of the Scottish National Party (Alex Salmond). The success of Labour in Scotland in its own unprecedented way since the working class obtained the vote in 1918 was widely represented as confirming ever more clearly that how "Scotland" voted did not decide which party governed Scotland. The conclusion that voting Labour in Scotland was ineffectual was becoming a matter of "common sense". On 23rd January 1992, the Scottish edition of *The Sun* newspaper splashed over its first sixteen pages its conversion to the nationalist cause of "Independence in Europe" in direct competition with their unionist and Labour-supporting rivals *The Daily Record* by "targeting a largely young, male, working-class market with a nationalist message" (Bennie 1997: 19).

While I found a dissatisfaction with New Labour and politics in general was readily expressed by locals, the production of an alternative political ideology was not so easily heard (*vide* Devine 1992). What I found during fieldwork was an older generation of locals who remain Labour voters and who, just as they were not interested in the Thatcherite experiment, are also uninterested in the New Labour project deemed necessary to make the Labour Party electable in *England*. The younger generation meanwhile, while sharing in this disaffection, are still ideologically "old Labour" like their parents' generation but, crucially, are so from a *nationalist* position.

### **The Scottish Six**

An example of New Labour's inability to accede to the realities of class and nation to occur during fieldwork was the decision regarding the "Scottish Six" which meant the Scots after 1 July 1999 must continue to receive their daily news of the world via the BBC in London / England as opposed to having a dedicated news service from Glasgow. On 20 October 1998 in *The Scotsman* newspaper came the news that the BBC

---

<sup>3</sup> Or as one wit put it in large red paint lettering on a gable end in the working class area of Craigmillar (Edinburgh) after the 1992 election: "Vote Labour For Fifty Useless Bastards".

board of governors were "minded" to oppose a separate news bulletin for Scotland. An article by Matt Wells concluded: "Now, many will feel that the BBC...already unpopular and distrusted among Scots...will be seen as the English Broadcasting Corporation."

On this decision by the BBC the lead story of the *Daily Mail* (Friday, 11 December 1998) had this to say:

The depth of anger felt about the decision to turn down Scotland for its own programme was summed up by Nigel Smith, former chairman of the Broadcasting for Scotland lobbying group: 'What do we have to do? Burn ourselves to death on the steps of BBC Scotland to achieve this?'

The Scottish media via a "dumbing down" of broadcast journalism is an important ethnographic site given that television is such a major site of cultural consumption among the working class. When *Scottish Television's* newsreader Angus Simpson tells us "in a packed programme" at lunchtime, we will have news of "the new Keanu Reeves film where he plays a serial killer", and BBC Scotland's *Reporting Scotland* presenter Jackie Bird promises another programme of more reports to the procurator fiscal "and a full weather report," we can safely up-date Harvie's view of Scottish television as "a tundra" (1998: 153) and sympathise with a pensioner in Whitehall Avenue watching the evening news bulletin of *Scotland Today* (2<sup>nd</sup> April 1999) peremptorily announcing in frustration at the poor quality: "See this Scottish news, it is absolutely pathetic!"

What must be explored is the idea that "truth" loses its relevance and meaning when the institutional practice of televisual representation does not pretend or aspire to produce any isomorphism between the realm of discursive signification and the realm of everyday reality; where public

broadcasting instead becomes the everyday experiencing of the negation of national and class identity so that when all that is offered is the spectacle or the order of simulacra, *Scottish Television* becomes "absolutely pathetic." One important consequence of this is that the nationalist project does not require any "backward glance" to constitute itself.

When Barth writes "...control and manipulation of public information and discourse is an extremely important part of the activities of every regime" (1994: 21), the importance of the struggle for control of public broadcasting can hardly be exaggerated as one of its primary functions is to mediate and reproduce on a daily basis the reality of the union and "Britishness" to its viewers. To question the union of Scotland and England is to politicise the vast majority of programming and reveal the ubiquity of English-based programming content and middle class bias in the daily television channel schedules. But for any such criticisms to occur there is required the conviction that the purpose of the programming of public service broadcasters is *representation*. Only the conviction that the *British Broadcasting Corporation* is supposed to represent the interests of working class Scots makes possible the view that the BBC is English dominated and middle class dominated among them. Should one not subscribe to this idea, charges of a systematic lack of representation must appear biased and wilful.

Another major and related presupposition underlying any possible complaint of non-representation is the belief of having a "culture" in the first place to be represented or discriminated against. On this point I will argue it is significant that in the nineteen-eighties and nineties there emerged a *cultural* politics of class in Scotland that demanded recognition, and increasingly understands itself as coming from "the people" and so views itself as an emergent *national* culture.

## Holyrood General Election

To recall what was felt to be at stake during the months and weeks prior to the first Holyrood elections to the new Scottish parliament, I reproduce a quote from an article in *The Scotsman* (Thursday 12 November 1998) titled *Gloves off as Holyrood Campaign Launched*:

The Prime Minister will open the election campaign today with a passionate defence of the Union...in a speech at Strathclyde University today....He will claim that the Holyrood election will be a battle between social justice and separatism...Mr Brown<sup>4</sup>...has already made a series of speeches and published a pamphlet.

The article quotes Tony Blair directly:

I will be emphasising that there is also a choice, if you like, between social justice versus separatism.. Ultimately, politics is about more than identities. It is also about ideals, and that is why in the coming months, the principled politics of social justice will overcome the narrow politics of identity.

Murray Ritchie of *The Herald* newspaper observed that in his speech, Tony Blair argued Labour's delivery of devolution had safeguarded the distinctiveness of Scotland's civic institutions so that the Prime Minister could argue: "The Nationalists can no longer argue Scottish nationhood is under threat." Intimately connected to the credibility of New Labour rhetoric vis-a-vis "social justice" is the issue of material poverty and its measurement. A *Scotsman* article, 27th March 1999, reported a study by the Treasury which had concluded:

41 per cent of all Scottish children under five lived in poverty. It also disclosed that 60 per

---

<sup>4</sup> Gordon Brown, chancellor of the Exchequer since May 1997 and Cardenden's member of the Westminster parliament.

cent of children in poverty lived in a household where no-one had a job.

Such evidence of the continuing reality of poverty acts to call into question the rhetoric of "radicalism" of New Labour. Worse still is the appearance of credible evidence that suggests devolution will negatively impact upon economic performance. On 9 April 1999, there appeared in *The Scotsman* an article entitled *Economists Back Independence* concerning a report issued by the *David Hume Institute* which had concluded that independence would be better for Scotland from an economic standpoint. The *Report On the Economic Aspects of Independence* was authored by David Simpson, honorary professor of economics at Heriot-Watt University and former chief economist at *Standard Life*; Brian Main, professor of economics at Edinburgh University and Sir Alan Peacock, a former chief economic adviser to the department of Trade and Industry. Partial devolution to Scotland will lead to political instability in the UK which, Sir Alan argued, "will not help economic policy." More significant than the report itself perhaps was the reaction from unionist politicians. In his response the late Donald Dewar, (then) Secretary of State for Scotland and soon to be the first First Minister in the Holyrood parliament, voiced doubts as to the integrity of the report saying: "It has been produced for the election and that is for sure." Jim Wallace, leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats, was quoted describing the report as "nonsense" saying: "Going for independence would be particularly damaging to the Scottish economy because of the uncertainty it would create."

However, in attempting to re-capture the political atmosphere of April 1999, the following editorial comments made by *The Scotsman* newspaper, which four weeks later would urge its readership to vote New Labour at the election of 6 May 1999, are worth quoting at length:

Independence is possible, especially within the union of Europe. But is it desirable to end a Union which has served the purposes of both

Scotland and England and resulted in so much miscegenation and cross-cultural enrichment that only a deranged anthropologist would dare distinguish between **ethnic** - as opposed to **native** - Scots and **ethnic** English?...Scots, so proud of Hume and the other scions of the Enlightenment, voted for devolution, not separation, and the think-tank named after him would do well to remember it.

(emphasis in original)

What is revealing is the fear of *ethnicity at home*, the references to Hume and the Enlightenment and the representation of Scots as being "so proud of Hume." What cultural logic is revealed via such clumsy ideological definitions of Scotland and being Scottish? What cultural logic is revealed by the Enlightenment being deployed in April 1999 in defence of unionism? It seems that something to be feared now in particular is an immanent "return of the repressed;" that on the verge of the first Holyrood elections Scotland may be about to see re-emerge a form of "medieval particularism." In this moment of identity-crisis then, and in contrast to familiar debates regarding the complicity of anthropology with nationalism, it seems that anthropology "at home" is called upon to defend Hume, the Enlightenment, unionism, a particular idea of Scotland and the Scots, and the defense of reason itself from the spectre of Scottish independence.

What qualifies as a "deranged" ethnographic project for the broadsheet editors is the idea that an anthropologist doing ethnography in a working class village in Scotland in 1999, even though there are a series of diacritics such as class, speech, occupation, locality etc., might conclude such multi-layered aspects of stratification could be classified as *ethnic* difference. When we factor into an ethnography the confluence of class and well established diacritics of difference such as education, physical and mental health, life expectancy, earnings, inherited cultural capital, expenditure, social mobility, type of dwelling, opportunity, geographic location, speech-forms, life-trajectory (*vide* HMSO 1995; Harding 1995; Reid 1998) etc., are we able to speak of *ethnic* differentiation when "*the*



*degree of an individual's ethnicity is a structural matter*" (Williams 1989: 415)? Further, is the popular discursive practice of describing Scotland as a "mongrel nation" a rhetorical genuflection to "pluralism" or perhaps a mystification of real difference (*vide* Turner 1984)?

As Bassam Tibi (*in* Hutchinson 1996) has argued regarding the strategy of adopting a meretricious (i.e. anti-ethnic) stance pursued by Tutsi political and social elites, so Williams similarly argues that in each polity, each particular hegemonic "ethnic" / class conflation is keen to mystify itself i.e. obscure its social make-up. Such a political strategy of divesting *one and all* of the categories upon which its own privilege is based aims to invalidate any attempt by rival class and ethnic confluences to gain power by deploying these same categorisations.

The concept of ethnicity is a rich one and is perhaps preferable given the sterile economic conceptions of the experience of being working class and framing "multiple difference". I view Cohen's argument that "...ethnicity may be of such positive value to members that lack of stratification and possible incorporation with loss of identity can produce countermovements to revive and reverse the cultural distinctiveness being lost" (1978: 394) as relevant to the situation of the Scottish working class under Thatcher and *New Labour*. It was to prevent a perceived cultural distinctiveness from being lost, to prevent themselves becoming symbolically incorporated into the middle class and part of "Cool Britannia," that the Scottish working class erected boundaries via a politicisation of class and nationality. When Scottish nationality becomes a criteria for judging "representability," in the context of three centuries of union with a far more populous and politically and economically powerful neighbour, a whole series of inequalities and grievances are unavoidable. Precisely to prevent this requires the appropriation of a *British* identity so that tracing the history

of the decline of this identity becomes crucial to explaining the rise of nationalism among the working class.

Crucial for the emergence of Scottish nationalism, as a working class phenomenon, was the judgement that Thatcher was an *English* phenomenon and that to overcome it would require the deployment of Scottish national identity. Many of my informants casually generalises the Thatcher period and conclude the English bourgeoisie and upper classes have always been in control of the British state, and that the only long-term solution to this condition is the dissolution of Britain. How then did this semantic sea change come about?

Jean-Klein (2001) has argued, regarding Palestine, we ought to look for the everyday expressions of nationalism in contrast to much anthropological thinking on nationalism which focuses upon professional and / or formal institutions as the principle agents and sites of nationalist discourse. Jean-Klein's case study on the Palestine *Intifada* allows her to connect nationalism with a popular practice among ordinary householders and town residents of suspending everyday normality.

In Cardenden one can adapt this thesis by considering the consequences of the unique and unprecedented year-long miners' strike of 1984-5, where the contestation of the British state reached the level of the everyday lives of miners and their families and, eventually, drew every local into this struggle. Practices of picketing, monitoring movements of coal, monitoring miners' observance of the strike on a daily basis etc., formed part of an everyday resistance to the anti-trade union and anti-miner government / state. By the time the poll tax was introduced in Scotland on April Fools Day 1988, a third of Scots refused to pay. Arguably, the civil disobedience of the Poll Tax was the "psychological" continuation of 1984-5 by other means. It was Thatcher's "attack" on locals as a class and the dismantling of 'their' industry and therefore class position, that made them respond via *nationalism*, because responding

“purely” as a class (e.g. voting Labour) was de facto to respond on an all-British basis and pool their resentments and sovereignty with the English working class whom they viewed (rightly or wrongly) as having voted for Thatcher in the first place.

It seems that in the period 1984-9 the British State for many lost much of its moral legitimacy especially among the younger generation of locals. Still to this day many families are still marked by the miners’ strike so that ex-miners are only now, for example, having reached sixty-five and being able to receive their state pension, are only now able to replace household furniture. But of greater political and historic import for the emergence of nationalism was that a consensus was reached that identified the *nature* of the British state itself as the problem by the end of the 1980s (*vide* Marquand 1993). Significantly, from 1987, if not before, the SNP explicitly began to appeal specifically to the working class of the central belt.

The Cardenden and Scottish miners and working class in general tried to mobilise against Thatcher via local, class and occupational identities during the miners' strike of 1984-5. This mobilisation failed. Subsequently, I argue, they began mobilising national identity much like Chatterjee (1993) writes of Indian nationalism drawing upon those reserves of difference (which were inaccessible to the British colonisers) so as to contest the British's imperialist usurpation of their country. In general then, the period 1979 - 1997 was a period of profound social change in Cardenden and a long period of identity re-configuration.

### **Rhetoric and Reality**

I argue working class Scots are beginning to exploit their “inequality” and their identity; are using their class position and national identity to equip themselves with a distinctive standpoint and politics which is routinely mis-recognised by much public and academic discourse but which is also far less easily “colonised” by New Labour or Tory analysis. Though

perhaps less hysterical in tone *The Scotsman* editorial view quoted earlier is fundamentally shared by prominent New Labour theorists of what is called the "New Unionism." To illustrate this contention I quote from an article in *Scotland On Sunday* (8 November 1998) which carried an extract from a pamphlet by the Labour MPs Gordon Brown and Douglas Alexander entitled *The Battle Between Social Justice and Separatism*:

It is therefore a serious mistake to portray devolution as some sort of halfway house, as if it were an unstable midpoint between the status quo and separation...the real battle in Scotland next May will be between those who put the politics of social justice first, and those who practice the politics of national identity above anything else.

Similarly, Brown and Alexander in the aftermath of the September 1997 Referendum on the establishment of a Scottish parliament argue in their pamphlet *New Scotland New Britain* (1998):

The debate is now no longer about whether Scottish nationhood or Scottish institutions are at risk.

Brown, Alexander and Blair (and therefore *New Labour* in general) conflate Scotland with civic "bourgeois" Scotland and fail to recognise, far less understand, Scottish nationalism in particular localities as a class-based rejection of political union with England which is indifferent to whether "civic Scotland" is or is not accommodated in the new devolved dispensation. The error of New Labour (and newspaper editorials) is to understand Scottish nationalism as the effort to preserve a *nation*. Working class nationalism is the desire to make a State out of an already constituted nation. Working class nationalism is not about safeguarding Scotland's "civic institutions."

New Labour's discursive representation of Scottish nationalism relies heavily upon inventing a dualism that does not exist. The misconceived

dualism of "nationalism versus social justice" implies a similarly flawed conception of subjectivity where, to have a class identity-based concern for social justice is to opt against one's national identity-based concern for political independence. The "New Unionist" idea that one must choose between them is a fiction resting upon a misconceived grasp of social reality not dissimilar to the original unionist arguments of 1707 which fabricated the "choice": either be poor and Scottish or prosperous and British.

To grasp the nature of working class nationalism is to realise that under Margaret Thatcher and John Major, far from "jeopardising" the Scottish nation, Scottish civic society can come and go: it does not matter! The Scottish nation and Scottish nationalism at this time were never more real and emergent. The Thatcher experiment was a 'gift' for nationalism because it was a Godsend to the politicisation of *class*. The view that with the advent of a devolved parliament the Scots can now stop being nationalists is a party political attempt at co-opting the nature and the direction of Scottish working class politics.

Watching a televised political hustings aired on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 1999 as part of the coverage of the first Scottish General Election campaign, at one point in the proceedings, and in light of opinion polls putting the SNP and Labour neck and neck in voting intentions for the Holyrood election, the Labour Party representative on the panel (Wendy Alexander) was asked three times if her fellow Scottish Labour Party member of parliament George Robertson had been wrong to claim "Devolution will kill nationalism stone dead." Obviously discomfited by the question, she refused on each occasion to answer. I mention this to highlight a political atmosphere where the very phrase "Scottish Nationalism" is so charged in political discourse as to justify a public show of hubris by its self-styled professional opponents, and a situation where Labour councillors and New Labour prospective parliamentary candidates can refer to Scottish nationalists as "sewer rats" and "racists."

Another remarkable feature about the Holyrood general election campaign was that just as the Conservative Party insisted prior to devolution that Scotland could ill-afford devolution in monetary terms, so New Labour similarly argued Scotland could not afford independence. Both the "old" unionism of the Conservative Party and the "new" unionism of New Labour agree to combat nationalism by appealing to "economic realities" and in their political discourse construct the Scottish voter and political rationality in terms of a politicised *homo economicus*. When such unionist strategies are coupled with the interests of "Big Business," which have been represented in the media as being jeopardised by the prospect of independence, there is a *de facto* cultural logic to newspaper articles such as appeared in *Scotland on Sunday* (November 1, 1998) entitled '*Big Business in Secret Bid to Save Union: Key Figures in Commerce and Industry line up to Oppose Independent Scotland*', that report:

A secret summit to plan a 'Save the Union' campaign featuring leading figures from the Scottish business community will take place this week. The talks will centre on...business fears about independence.

I argue that Scotland will move on from devolution to independence not because of some residual momentum derived from Thatcherism, or the period 1979-1997, or some "slippery slope" to independence, but for the same reasons it moved from the *status quo ante*, i.e. due to class-based and nationality-based facts of class division and national conflict that remain as real as ever. This dialectic of class via nation is continuing under New Labour.

The "New Unionism" of New Labour envisages more than moving beyond old class and nation identities. In his speech (Thursday, November 12th 1998) in Strathclyde University, the Prime Minister called for Scots to back his vision of a new Scotland in a multi-cultural,



multi-ethnic and multi-national union with England. This view is echoed by Brown and Alexander in their pamphlet *New Scotland New Britain*:

*Our opportunity is to forge probably the first successful multi-cultural, multi - ethnic and multi-national country.*<sup>5</sup>

In contrast to this example of what Alain Touraine (1981) has called "*une sociologie sans societe*," I argue that an emergent working class generation are set to refuse the treadmill of unionism, multi-culturalism and internationalism as envisaged by New Labour rhetoric. This "New Unionist" project of New Labour is not articulated as a matter of personal or class or party political expediency but within the framework of *modernity* and the movement of *history*. Gordon Brown and Douglas Alexander argue modern economies operate beyond the confines of "*the sheltered national economics of the past*" and so the SNP, by being nationalists, are *de facto* guilty of dragging Scotland and its economy "backwards". Once the "new unionism" after 1 July 1999 is safely returned to its traditional modernist intellectual moorings, Brown, Alexander and Blair conceive it as their up-dated duty to urge Scots to stick with union with England.

During the election campaign to the Holyrood parliament (29th April 1999) I began talking politics with a local man and wife after having conducted an interview. Both were life-long Labour voters, had never seriously considered voting for any other political party, and have no obvious desire for Scottish independence although both voted "Yes, Yes" in the September 1997 Referendum. We were watching an evening news election report from England on English attitudes to Scottish devolution. There was an interview with an 'ex-pat' from Dunfermline who was against the idea of a Scottish parliament. Next in the report were the views of pupils from a local English public school who were discussing the issue of Scottish Home Rule. The pupils were also against the idea of

---

<sup>5</sup> In the 1991 *Census* the 'Ethnic Group' denoted by the category 'White' constitutes 99.26 % of the population of Fife.

Home Rule for Scotland. One pupil said: "Scotland still needs England to support it." At this, one of my informants pointedly remarked: "Of course ye could change yer mind." Although I did not specifically question her as to what she had meant by her remark, it was clear that because she saw the anti-independence views she had just finished defending being in collusion with what she saw as the precocious conceit of an English schoolboy.

The boy in his teenage sincerity revealed the perception of "truth" is structural; that the truth of Anglo-Scottish relations is not a transcendental truth "in itself" existing "out there" in objective reality, but a culturally located and fundamental English attitude and judgement about Scotland available to any English schoolboy. When one's reasoned and deliberate views on British constitutional politics are reduced to a teenage conceit, these views no longer seem so "reasonable."

Other locals pinpointed some of the experiences that have helped inform their pro-independence stance. The very first interview conducted during fieldwork, 7 June 1999, was with Andrew Donaldson (5 Kinglassie Road) who recounted the following anecdote as justification for his support of the SNP and independence:

*Ah mean if ye cannae stand up fir yer ain country...Ah mean okay, Ah'll gie ye an instance e what Ah felt. Ah wis talkin tae a guy wane night, Ah wis at a doo, an there was a Dutchman there. An Ah've worked in Holland, Ah know how they think, how they work, how they behave an aa the rest e it, ...an this Dutchman was makin a fool e his sel, he wis enjoyin his sel, having a good time, an somebody wis sittin, they were all Scotch people, and he turns an says "You're nuthin but a fuckin arsehole" an he says "Aye, maybe Ah am..." he says "...but Ah govern maself. There's a difference". That summed it up. That summed it right up.*

While social scientists have generated a literature devoted to the definition of nationalism, the clear acceptance of the term "nationalism" in Cardenden is support for the SNP's policy of independence. In defining specifically *working class* nationalism, I combine Gellner's definition of nationalism as "*primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent*" (1983: 1) with Ahmad's desire "*to retain here the idea that nationalism has no essence of its own that determines its trajectory but that an essence is given to it, in particular situations, by the power block that takes hold of it*" (in Wood & Foster 1997: 56-7).

One of the simplest examples of the "spectre of comparisons" (Anderson 1998) germane to producing a nationalist conclusion was expressed as follows:

*Bit Ah mean Ah'm aa fir Scotland bein on its ain ken. Ah mean, likes e, if ye look abroad, aa the wee countries they're aa independent. An Ah mean they're aa joined up tae ither countries ken. So Ah'm aa fir Scotland bein oan its ain.*

Andrew Peebles  
South Dundonald  
Cottage No. 2 (East)

From the above quotes we see that in the construction of the desire for independence the example of other nations helps to naturalise the politicisation of national identity. It is contact with other nationality groupings, either directly or mediately, that are often the occasion for evoking a nationalist response. But just as the spectre of comparisons with other independent nations can encourage the constitution of a nationalist response, it can also provoke a unionist response. Asking one local for her views as to why a Scottish parliament has been established she answered:

*Ye always have the rebels who want these kinds of things, you know? And I really dinnae approve e pittin a line at aa through a country cause when ye see what's happening oot in Kosovo at the moment and there are people who are gonnae fight wi each other like Ireland. And these kind e things Ah think are absolutely terrible. Ah really think that people should really try tae pull together, and not tae go back.*

Anne Penman  
28 Muirtonhill Road

More often than not however, interviewees deployed "difference" between Scotland and England to justify a nationalist political conclusion. Locals' judgement of the existence or non-existence of difference between Scotland and England emerged as central to the direction of locals' politicisation of Scottish-English relations, so that on this basis, next-door neighbours will express totally opposing viewpoints:

*You know Ah really think we're quite different from doon south as well in a lot e aspects you know.*

Teresa McGlaughlin  
1 Orebank Road

And,

*No. Ah definitely widnae want tae see us bein independent. Ah jist think we should aa be wane United Kingdom. Why can we no be wane? Ah jist think we're aa the same. Ah mean years ago they voted Scottish Nationalist because there was a big thing.<sup>6</sup> It was a young person's thing and ye were young an ye wanted tae vote fir them, bit Ah think in hindsight it was a bit silly and it never done any guid anyway.*

Janet Reilly  
3 Orebank Road

On the crucial question of perceptions of "difference," Gellner argues in *Nations and Nationalism* (1983) that the emergence of an industrial

---

<sup>6</sup> By 1968 the SNP had the largest membership of all the political parties in Scotland.

nation-state such as Britain progresses in parallel with a homogenising of culture. Hence for the successful emergence of industrial Britain and the successful emergence of *homo economicus*, the suppression of Scotland, Jacobitism, Catholicism, Gaeldom and the Scots language were all justified. Importantly, the reasons for such cultural suppression recapitulated an earlier Protestant Reformation which justified a similar policy via a "heretical" *theology*; both were expressions not of any petty or personal anti-Scottish prejudice but something much more important: the movement of history and progress (whether theological or secular) so that the suppression of Scotland was for "its own good"; and what was "good" was that which saved Scotland from medieval particularism (in Lenin's formulation) to ensure it was not left behind in the "by-waters" (a necessary fiction modernism must invent to constitute itself) of history.

#### **5.4 Class and Nation**

The structural argument I am presenting centres upon the contention that the analogy of class and national identity can not be left undeveloped in an emergent integral self. While of course individual locals prefer devolution and oppose independence, viewed historically, the working class have not spent five or six generations ascending to cultural and national structures to opt for devolution. If the politicisation of integral selves means anything it means integral i.e. *exclusive* political sovereignty.

A comparative approach to the different effects of de-industrialisation and the subsequent nationalist mobilisation among working class groups might be a useful means of illuminating defining characteristics (*vide* Glenny 1990). Siegelbaum and Walkowitz's (1995) study of eastern Ukrainian miners makes the point that like Thatcher in the UK, Gorbachev and Yeltsin in the USSR oversaw a massive retreat of the multi-national state from industry in general and national / "regional" coalmining industries in particular. Arguably then, just as there was a mass strike in July 1989 among Ukrainian miners in protest at central

government economic policy followed by a subsequent withdrawal of support for the Soviet state, paving the way towards Ukrainian independence in 1991, an analogy may be posited with regard to the role of the miners' strike in Britain in 1984-5 and a similar subsequent withdrawal of consent from the British state and the up-take of nationalism among a de-industrialised national population.

On October 25 (1998) there appeared an article in *Scotland on Sunday* titled *Unison Branch Demands Union Donate Funds to SNP*, which gave details of a branch of the trade union *Unison* in Glasgow demanding the union begin funding the SNP. The article gives details of a unanimously carried motion arguing that the SNP offered policies more in line with the interests of trade union members. The article also mentions that the motion, while likely to be debated at Unison's Scottish council in December, was certain to be defeated by Labour-supporting delegates. Alex Dingwall, the assistant branch secretary in Glasgow city was quoted as follows:

There is a general recognition within our membership that given the changing nature of Scottish politics we have to have a voice in other political parties, arguing the Unison case.

Two further examples of "class becoming nation" to have occurred recently came in November 1998 when the *Scottish Socialist Party* was formed after seceding from its all-British format and adopted the nationalist policy of independence. On 1 May 2001 came the merger of the *Scottish Workers Party* with the *Scottish Socialist Party*, signalling another belated victory for nationalism and defeat for internationalism among the Scottish Left.

Arguing for a structuralist conception of working class nationalism is to not define nationalism as "that outlook which gives an absolute priority to the values of the nation over all other values and interests" (Hroch in Eley & Suny 1996:



62) as this is a substantive definition of nationalism. On such a definition there are very few nationalists in Cardenden. Hroch's distinction between *nationalism* and "*national movement*" (1993) is helpful as many of my informants are far removed from the ideological exclusivity that is often attached to the ideology of nationalism by middle class intellectuals. This analytical mis-recognition of nationalism creates conceptual confusion and a certain interpolation of locals' consciousness, which acted to prevent one local informant from voting SNP as she had become suspicious that to do so was to endorse a racist ideology. I quote from an interview with Miss Muir (25 Woodend Park):

Who did you vote for if you don't mind me asking?

SNP.

*Aye?*

Bit Ah wish Ah didnae really.

*Aye? Why?*

Ah think we should jist probably be aa one really, Ah think. It's probably a bit racist.

What did you say?

Well, the Scottish against the English...it's true though [embarrassed laughter].

*Do you think if you vote SNP folk will think...*

You're against the English.

You think that's what it's like?

Aye, a bias.

The burden of explaining the rise of Scottish nationalism is not to be borne by events in a reified political sphere but rather by issues of class and culture, and not simply in Scotland but in England as well. It was not a reified something named "the union" or a prolonged meditation upon the unwritten British constitution that created the rise of Scottish nationalism. It was the "social fact" that most Scots, predominantly identifying themselves as being working class, kept voting one way and most English voters another and opposite way, and that this kept happening "every time" in the experience of the generation that came to political consciousness from 1979. The problem was not due to any "democratic deficit" but was due to democracy itself being repeatedly

shown to be mediated via two opposing nationalities and two opposing electorates that were fundamentally at odds with each other for a generation. Hence the relevance of Gellner's assertion that "...the ideological or doctrinal history of nationalism is largely irrelevant to the understanding of it" (1992).

It was not the relation of union, of inequality between a small and less populous nation and that of a much larger and populous nation but the *difference* of political ideology that this relation of political union made possible; that meant the *relation* became visible and mediated concretely and therefore was seen to be the issue. Only when the "nation" became a class issue could working class nationalism begin. Only when an established ideological *difference* appeared to be going on *ad infinitum*, was the relationship of political union between England and Scotland questioned as the cause of an undemocratic, unrepresentative and unfair constitutional arrangement. This ideological *difference* was not caused by the union or a difference in nationality *per se*; the union or the constitution has little to do with the Scottish working class voting Labour, just as they have little to do with the English working class not voting Labour. Whatever the cultural causes of these differing voting patterns and political differences between Scotland and England, they are not caused by the union or the British constitutional settlement or nationality.

It is the political *difference* and not the *relation* of union that is the source of the '79 generation's problem; only *subsequently* does the relation become problematic because it prohibits the clearly expressed political preference of the Scots working class translating into the political hegemony they have come to expect in the Labour-dominated central belt of Scotland. The relation of union certainly allows for the Scots to democratically express their class-based ideological preferences, but on an "international" basis. Hence, if we have the "return of Scotland" it is based upon the survival of a politics of class i.e. is the "return" of working class politics in the guise of politicised nationality.

Class-based ideological difference is not enough to explain the rise of Scottish nationalism; nor can Scottish nationalism be reduced to class. If the driving reality behind the rise of Scottish nationalism were only class-based difference there is every reason to suppose that had the Scots been Tory voters or the English Labour voters, there would have been no problem of nationality. From a structuralist standpoint this contention is justifiable.

As I have argued, just as I think it fair to say most locals would view "Thatcherism" as a peculiarly English phenomenon, so New Labour can be fairly characterised as an invention of the English Left to solve a particular English problem i.e. the "English" voting for the Conservative Party at general elections. The New Labour project is to the credit of the English political Left attempting to address this problem. However, this serves to highlight the fact that the Labour Party in Scotland have yet to speak as so far they have danced to the nationalist tune and many of their '45 generation supporters reveal this inertia by "going with the flow" vis-a-vis their support for the Scottish parliament. The '45 generation Labour-voters are free to admit what the MPs they elect cannot.

The overwhelming majority of my respondents are not professionals and so the "remnant" of the nation of the "civic Scotland" of church, education and law that negotiated its survival during the 1688-1707 settlement period is not relevant to how they conceive and practice their national identity. It was the success of the working class in entering and transforming the public sphere and experiencing taking control of the State via their political representatives that made possible the subsequent "disenfranchisement" or what is referred to in the pre-devolution literature as the *democratic deficit* of 1979 - 1997; only a prior empowerment meant it *was* indeed intolerable, and helped the development of nationalism that is currently fostering the demand for a further transformation of the public and political sphere on the basis of nationality.

There can be no doubt that affluence and even a certain indifference to politics has helped a politics of nationality to emerge in Scotland as these developments have eroded the hegemony of 'materialist-based' Labour voting among the working class. Just as many of the '45 generation claim Scotland cannot "afford" the real nationalism of independence, so many of the '79 generation feel they *can* now afford such a politicisation of class via nationality. Just as previously indifference to politics was an unaffordable luxury among the working class, now, having successfully constituted themselves as a class, they are successfully constituting themselves as a "people." They have been poor and voted Labour; transformed the state by creating the welfare state. Now "affluent," and as class is becoming defined *culturally* as well as materially, so class is becoming nation, and the working class is moving from Labour to the SNP and will move from Home Rule to independence in Europe.

This presentation of how class mediates and 'determines' national identity and nationalism is not to be understood as suggesting that Scottish nationalism is a simple "superstructural" expression of class conflict. Just as there is no agreed upon definition of class, so there is no agreed view regarding the politicisation of class via nationality. Hence just as the Marxist can evidence to his satisfaction the essentially "bourgeois" character of nationalism, the working class nationalist can similarly construct "Scotland" to mean a history of struggle against imperialist (English) class ambition, and the very concept of Britain as a "treacherous" invention of an Anglo-Scottish nobility, and claim Scotland is an unimagined political community among the Scottish bourgeoisie, and thereby evidence to his satisfaction the essentially "proletarian" pedigree of Scottish nationalism.

Viewing Scottish nationalism through the prism of class is not new. Theorists such as Wallerstein (1979; 1980) and Hechter (1975; 1976) have applied a class-based analysis to Anglo-Scottish relations and view Scottish nationalism as a form of class struggle transposed to the level of the nation. In contrast, McCrone (1992; 1998) and Nairn (1997; 2000)

have argued Scotland was never a colony or a "proletariat" to a ruling English "bourgeoisie," but rather the junior partner in the union and the "adventure" of Empire. Whatever the historical accuracy of academic debate, the local working class themselves tend to see Scotland more as dominated by England in the union which is analogous to their class-based "them and us" reading of society. Clearly the construction of the nation as a colony or junior partner, or in some way fundamentally tied into an unequal union, has important consequences for any politicisation of the nation along nationalist lines.

It cannot be surprising the lower classes will identify with those representations of national history which reproduce a similar struggle against subordination, for example, to an other country as this reconstructs at the national level something experienced at a class level. As with watching football, so with watching a film such as *Braveheart*; the same structure of feeling and identification practices are reproduced. At the time of the cinema release of *Braveheart* there were newspaper reports of violence between "Scottish" and "English" people because of the contents of the film. I recall one tradesman in a conversation telling me after watching this film he "Wanted tae punch fuck oot e some English cunt."

There is nothing absurd or pre-rational then when a vegetable packer or warehouse labourer identifies himself immediately and passionately with medieval Scots peasants portrayed in the film *Braveheart*. But for a doctor or lawyer even to be even present in the *Railway Tavern* watching Scotland play England, far less performing all of the other acts of self-identification with the nation that happen, would be incongruous. But the fact is the former do and the latter do not, and in each case it has little to do with the former's grasp of the Husserlian *Lebenswelt* of the medieval Scots peasantry or the latter's alienation from today's sporting calendar. The furniture warehouse worker is easily able to perform these practices because they are in fact part of his everyday experience; hence

their real psychic 'release value' and the easy identification with such cinematic or televised scenes of national representation.

The emergent project among the '79 generation is an integration of politics, culture and identity where Gellner's definition of nationalism fuses with what Kravitz (1997) has identified as what is defining today about Scottish literature, i.e. the movement away from McDiarmid's *Caledonian antisizygy* of the divided "British Scot" (as demonstrated by Catherine in chapter one) and its accompanying literary representations, to a self congruent with itself and reflected in an emerging literary production. The combination of these two projects is what working class nationalism is attempting because it reflects the integralism that working class structuration among the '79 generation demands; what is demanded is the exercise of "sovereignty" that refuses the separation of the personal from the political and refuses to stand down the question of class from the political and cultural (*vide* Bhabha 1990).

In his essay *What is a nation?* (1882), Renan convincingly argued that *forgetting* history was a crucial element in creating national identity. However, when social analysts write "We are all nationalists now" (McCrone 1998: ix), they naturalise the achievement of the Scottish parliament as they in fact are already "forgetting" history even before the nation is "re-born." To follow McCrone's naturalisation of nationalism can only leave future generations puzzled as to why the *annus mirabilis* of 1999 took so long to happen in the first place. This is why it has been important to ethnographically evidence the idea that we are all nationalists now is simply untrue. Most people in Cardenden are not nationalists in any obvious *ideological* sense. The vast majority of people are not SNP members or supporters; do not unequivocally wish to see an independent Scotland, nor do they value 'the nation' above all other values. Most informants do not even discursively articulate the small 'n' nationalism of the unionist "nationalism" of devolution.



The SNP has the grand total of four members in Cardenden<sup>7</sup>. When coupled with the fact that in the September 1997 Referendum on the establishment of a Scottish parliament, only 45% of the electorate voted in favour, this hardly inspires the conclusion we are all nationalists now. Far from being the "settled will" of the Scottish people it seems to evidence rather the settled political inertia of the majority of Scots. How then do we reconcile the views of academics such as McCrone who see devolution as an expression of political nationalism with those of the unionist architects of devolution such as Donald Dewar and the Labour and Liberal parties? How can devolution be nationalism when it was designed to "kill nationalism stone dead"?<sup>8</sup> The answer is whether one thinks something called "unionist nationalism" (*vide* Morton 1999) is oxymoronic or not.

It is not then that McCrone is imputing a form of "false consciousness" to the advocates of the Holyrood parliament by implying its architects are fooling themselves if they think that can avoid the title 'nationalists' simply because they do not advocate independence. McCrone is correct to describe the *political parties* and politicians in Scotland today as "all nationalists now". The main political parties can hardly avoid being "nationalist" today as the forum for Scottish politics is now the Holyrood parliament so that the only alternative is to be identified with a failed and rejected *status quo ante*. In a general cultural sense then, one must be a nationalist "more or less" so as not to share the same political oblivion that befell the Conservative and Unionist Party in Scotland in May 1997. And the *least* nationalist one can credibly be today is that of the small 'n' variety of devolution.

Trying to pinpoint *the* moment when "class became nation" is a misconceived problematic as there have been a number of occasions when this has happened. Central to any explanation of the events of 1 July 1999 is the Labour Party's historic change of policy after the 1979

---

<sup>7</sup> Information supplied by local SNP branch membership secretary, Ann Bain, March 2001.

<sup>8</sup> Lord Robertson, Nato Secretary General.

Referendum to a commitment to enact Home Rule legislation. Traditionally, most locals support Labour and many are in favour of a Scottish parliament only to the extent they are Labour voters. I believe then that locals are correct in their political instincts when they intuit that it is "nationalism as devolution" that has been "imagined" and engineered and represented as the people's "settled will" in conscious opposition to the nationalism of independence they see other former stateless nations achieving. Unsurprisingly then, when interviewing on peoples' doorsteps, I found a degree of confusion and suspicion regarding the Labour Party's *motives* for establishing a Scottish parliament, as evidenced by the following exchange with an elderly married couple Thomas (retired miner) and Helen Shand (7 Whitehall Crescent, 24 October, 1999):

Why do we have a parliament now?

*Tam: Because the English folk Ah think they're wantin tae break away. It's no us that's wantin tae break away. Ah think the English folk are wantin their ain country because they see it. If it's onything tae dae wi Scotland it's British bit if it's onythin tae dae wi England it's English. Whaure could ye get a Union if they're gonnae be like that?*

Helen: Well Ah dinnae ken actually. Ah didnae think we wid ever get it, the way the Labour went an everythin.

*Tam: Ah think it's through the nationalists, the nationalists! They're the wanes that pressed an...*

Helen: Aye that's right!

Tam: ...they have, they're at the bottom e getting the Scottish parliament. It's no Labour! Labour would have went along the way they were gaun...

Helen: Aye.

Tam: ...sittin doon there!

Helen: Couldnae care less!

Tam: Bit the nationalists got the parliament up here.

Ego: Dae ye think it's jist tae shut them up, keep them quiet?

Helen: Ah think so.

Tam: Could be. Bit Ah don't think it'll quiet them.

Helen: It'll no quiet them.

Tam: Bit Ah mean if they keep at it they could possibly get in theirsels ye ken.

And again from Wilma Beattie (4 Orebank Road, 14 November 1999):

Ah dinnae think much e Tony Blair like. Ah dinnae like him. He's a control freak. He's just like, Ah think they're aa jist like big brother is watching you. So Ah dinnae ken what his reasons are for letting Scotland get their parliament and get power, Ah dinnae ken what the **reason** fir that wis. There must have been some reason. Ah mean jist suddenly come up an says ye can have yer ain parliament jist like that you know. That jist doesnae jist happen itsel. Ah honestly jist think it's a set up. That's what Ah honestly think. Ah dinnae really think that the parliament is daen us much guid, because Ah dinnae think it's allowed tae dae much guid. They've aa got tae get in there an be there but they're bound tae ken theirsels that they're only jist puppets eh? That's how Ah feel.

Many believe the Labour Party's commitment to Home Rule to be a matter of political expediency so that the real cultural and political logic of devolution does not lie in devolution as a substantive stable nature that voters can recognise and understand. Rather, its "nature" in fact lies outside itself because it was conceived as a means of preventing the "real nationalism" of independence. Hence, in the government's White Paper *Scotland's Parliament* published in July 1997 outlining New Labour's proposals for a Scottish parliament, one is hard pressed to locate a single sentence or phrase of nationalist rhetoric anywhere in its forty-three pages. Hence, it was not Donald Dewar's trips to Catalunya or Labour MEPs trips to Bavaria that locals looked to as providing models of "real" nationalism when I was conducting interviews.

I felt many locals were open to the extent that even if they voted SNP or Labour, it did not automatically imply an explicit *ideological* commitment to unionism or nationalism. As the following interview with retired local James Reid (Whitehall Crescent, 24 October 1999) shows, there is a political fluidity that does not confine itself to any particular party line even for the duration of an interview:

*How did ye vote?*

**Jim:** Ah've always voted Labour.

*Do you think we really need this parliament?*

**Jim:** Course we need it!

*Tell me why.*

**Jim:** Well fir years we've been ruled by Conservatives and this is the first break we've ever hid. An' now we'll have to make good.

*Why do you think we have this parliament now?*

**Jim:** Ye can take it all the way back. Fir years and years and years and this is the only chance we'll ever get of putting our thing right.

*Right, we need a parliament. Are you in favour of independence?*

**Jim:** Yes.

*Is that not treasonable talk if yer a Labour man?*

**Jim:** Ah am a Labour man.

*But the Labour party doesn't want Scotland to be an independent nation.*

**Jim:** Ah tae hell! It's times everythin was changed. Everythin else is changin and it's times this was changin also.

As mentioned, this political fluidity draws upon the popular idea that devolution is not something definite in its own right; is something that has difficulty 'being itself'. Listening to the radio station *Radio Forth* three days after the first session of the restored parliament, I noted the newsreader using the phrase "...the Scottish government...". This was the first time I had heard such a phrase. The phrase was to gain further significance given the future furore over Henry Mcleish re-

adopting this phrase when he became First Minister on October 27th 2000<sup>9</sup>. Sometime after July 1999 however, this phrase, "the Scottish government", was discontinued by the Scottish media. Watching the news programme *Reporting Scotland* on 10th November 1999, the new phrase "the Scottish Executive today..." was used.

People were perplexed to learn that they had a Parliament but did not have a Government. The initial belief of having a government as opposed to a "Scottish Executive" adds to the confusion as to what exactly devolution is, and perhaps indicates people were already ahead of the vocabulary of devolution and are preparing for government / independence regardless of the concerns of Holyrood - Westminster etiquette; that Scots now view not only their relationship to the state but *where* the state lies differently i.e. that the state has been repatriated back to Edinburgh.

Given my insistence upon an emergent *integral* self among the '79 generation I argue having to settle for the small 'n' variety of nationalism means having to settle for the small 'c' variety of class, the small 's' variety of sovereignty, the small 'p' variety of politics and the small 'r' variety of reality. Frustrating an emergent integralism means there is created an entire Platonic realm of lesser copies or "forms" in a lesser Scotland because it is elsewhere in another ideal and more real location i.e. the Westminster parliament, that resides their more perfect "eternal" Ideas or Essences. An account of an emergent working class self and working class nationalism means a native "Aristotelian" break with an inherited British Platonist dualism akin to the philosophical revolution inaugurated by Aristotle which envisages finally bringing to an end the current situation of "*wandering between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born*" (Matthew Arnold).

---

<sup>9</sup> And resigned from office on 8 November 2001.

## 5.5 The Public Emergence of Reality

Today for most people is the first day of reality.

Roseanna Cunningham SNP MSP  
12 May 1999

It has been a long and tortuous journey for the Scottish National Party to reap the benefits of proportional representation. As Bennie *et al* write: "...the SNP has consistently had most to complain about" (1997: 16) as they have consistently been most under-represented by the first-past-the-post electoral system. It was the working class SNP vote in the central belt in particular that had the greatest increase in their representation thanks to the electoral system of proportional representation adopted for the Holyrood elections. Attempting to explain this public emergence of reality, one younger informant (Steven Haggart, 38 Muirtonhill Road, July 25<sup>th</sup> 1999) put it well:

*It seems tae hae been oor generation that started it and they're gonnae finish it off. Ma mum an that, she thinks we should get it [independence] noo, bit when Ah wis growin up she jist voted Labour. Whereas noo they see us, me an aa ma mates vote SNP so we're startin it. We've got the parliament and the ones that are growin up they'll hear it mair fae us than we did fae oor mum and dad, so they're gonnae pick up on it.*

The above quote captures many of the generative themes to emerge from fieldwork and is as precise a summary of my understanding of an emergent working class nationalism as I could have hoped for from an informant. Steven speaks of historical and political process and the shift in allegiance across the generations in an intimate kinship idiom and reveals the self-understanding of his generation (an integral part of which is a critique of the '45 generation) as that which achieved the Holyrood Parliament and, in due course, will achieve independence.



Because a pre-requisite of an integral explanation of national identity or working class nationalism is an account of how people experience being of a certain class, any such explanation must explain much more than national identity to understand the real experiencing of national identity. To do otherwise is to produce a partial reification of identity. To give an integral explanation of experience then is the ethnographic challenge; an integral explanation of the experiencing of nationality, the experiencing of class, and no doubt the experiencing of other identities which each mediate and influence the other.

When retired miner Bert Lister announces peremptorily on his doorstep, after I introduce myself and inform him I am researching attitudes to the Scottish parliament, "*Ah'm Scottish through and through!*," this integral quality of national identification is very particular; it does not fall heaven-sent nor is it something transmitted intact "through the ages". Rather, it is shaped bodily, has an ingrained somatic coding and quality. Such identifications with nationality and claims about the self derive their onto-substantive quality from an unequivocal class experience i.e. worked and integral self, and partake of this *habitus* and the triangulation of id, identity and ideology described earlier in chapter two. It is an assertion of identity that does not suggest a fragmented self or self-understanding but rather a *substantial* enduring quality which his "Scottishness" presents itself to him as having; a national identity that is not the term of an option or construction or as a conscious choice, but is a given and a necessary given.

Paradoxically, as the constructivist approach to nationality correctly holds there is nothing inevitable or "natural" about the existence of nations or of individuals being national, in allowing that the self is constructed i.e. is socially mediated, is also to admit a miner experiences not simply national identity but his body and his self differently. In the constructivist view, nationality, the body and the self are not things that subsist "in themselves" but are mediated and made *relationally* to

subsist in an integral fitting together in any particular person. And when such relations endure from generation to generation, a constructivist approach to identity must begin to talk about structural constructs becoming *substantive* realities.

The constructivist approach must also be mediated temporally. Somewhat ironically perhaps, the bodily *habitus* described in chapter two is only now conceivable as a something *in itself* because it is in conditions of de-industrialisation and post-mining that it is 'seeable' that the high point of industry and locality *helped obscure* a basic condition or habitus because a prior richness of civic life, and the presence of agreed codes of behaviours and many other "structures of finality" and meaning available to locals acted as an obscuring pluralism or "mystifications" of this self. At present, in contrast, there is very little "superstructural congestion" claiming to represent this working class self. Where once there was a proscriptive local model of kinship and family, the exercise of authority, fear of poverty and unemployment, a local bourgeoisie and rival political ideologies that each in their own way channelled, censored and mediated the permissible construction and expression and experiencing of the self (whether the worked self or the national self), and given that only now among the '79 generation in particular are these cultural norms, including British identity, in massive decline, only now is a worked subjectivity and (Scottish) national identity able to emerge as something "in itself."

As the state intervened directly in industry and the local coal company, for example, no longer provided benefits such as employment, schooling and housing, the worker was able to free himself from its omnipresence as the company withdrew from its domination of local public space. Eventually, the coal company retreated from its paternalist welfare provision role to become "just" a coal company and in proportion to this retreat from the role of "patron," so the worker quickly divested himself of the self-concept of "client" and begin to emerge "in himself." As the worker could begin to divide more sharply his experience between that of

worker during his shift, and non-worker during his leisure time, as the coal company retreated from its hegemonic presence, a space emerged into which the worker could construct other identities; as if via an internal "spectre of comparisons" (Anderson) could "see" as some "thing," his worked self. Because he now inhabited a structurally changed relationship to the organisation and experience of social space and therefore to himself, he could constitute an identity and a politics and was objectively or structurally released to begin the "turn to the subject." With no need to "keep in with the gaffer" (as one of Corrie's songs expresses it) or cue at the private doctors' house and have to pay for treatment at the point of delivery once health was taken out of middle class professional "collective hands" with the nationalisation of health, the two classes could each go further their own way.

The first breakthrough occurred in the political realm where after 1918 politics became constituted on class lines; this subsequently reproduced itself *vis-a-vis* the public sphere which became constituted along similarly collectivist, if not socialist, lines. While these are a few of the major signposts in what is referred to as the rise of the working class, the current challenge to the working class is the emergence of neo-liberal or third stage capitalism since the nineteen seventies and eighties that, while unable to claim the end of nationality after 1989, certainly postulates an "end of class."

Because the integral self responds integrally to social change, the emergence of the worked self and the national self emerge in tandem. We are currently living through the decline from the highpoint of working class initiation into and transformation of the state and the public sphere. The emergent working class self in the nineteen-seventies in particular among those born after 1945 suffered as a result of de-industrialisation and an enforced early retirement from heavy industries and an enforced change to insecure conditions of employment.

In the aftermath of the second general election in 1974 when the SNP secured 30% of the vote and returned eleven MPs, the Labour MP Michael Foot confided to the SNP's Winnie Ewing: "*It is not the eleven of you that terrify me so much, Winnie, it is the forty-two seconds*" (in Clements *et al* 1996: 66), i.e. the forty-two constituencies where the SNP polled second place. Since at least 1974 then the politicisation of the working class vote in the industrial central belt has meant a two-horse race between the SNP and Labour. To borrow from Waquant's pugilist metaphor: the emergence of the working class self and the "working class nation" are only round three in a dialectic of emergent class; where round one was the transformation of politics after 1918, round two was the inauguration of the welfare state after 1945 and round three will see the emergence of working class subjectivity laying claim to its own nation-state after 1999 (*vide* Foster 1989).

That very few locals (such as Steven) may discursively articulate this deep continuity is irrelevant as it is not the *idea* of independence that is significant but the historic / structural forces favouring the emergence of a working class nationalist project. Given the "intimate" rendering (i.e. via kinship and locality) of this emergent nationalism by Steven quoted earlier, perhaps Gellner was only half-correct when he wrote that nationalism is "a phenomenon of *Gesellschaft* using the idiom of *Gemeinschaft*" (1995) as, due to the rigors of industrialisation and the creation of Cardenden (and any number of localities in the central belt) as an occupational community, working class nationalism needs no backward glance to a pre-modern *Gemeinschaft* to constitute its nationalism by; working class nationalism is a phenomenon of *Gesellschaft* using the idiom of *Gesellschaft*.

However, despite a third stage in the public emergence of class reality, we still routinely take for granted the disappearance of the working class in the public sphere. When watching the television debut of Ian Rankin's *Inspector Rebus* (Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2000), Eva asked:

Why are they talking like that? I thought he  
[Rebus] was from Cardenden. Nobody in Cardenden  
talks like that!

Only someone "foreign" to the assumptions underlying the regimes of media representation in Scotland could formulate such a question with any sincerity. However, since the nineteen-eighties representations of class and nation have become integral to an emergent politics of identity. Kravitz's recent contrasting a prior literary representation of the "subaltern Scot" with an emerging literary representation of Scots as "*whole, not split people*" (1997: xix) identifies an emergent integralism that is new and culturally and politically significant. Opposition to "Thatcherism" was cultural as well as political, as was evidenced by the formation of the organisation *Artists For Independence* in the wake of the 1992 general election result.

As of 1 July 1999 we have the congruence of political representation with social reality at the national level and we currently await First Minister Jack McConnell and Prime Minister Tony Blair to authorise proportional representation (and a further public emergence of cultural and class reality) at the local / regional level of government. The already publicly established reality of SNP / Labour contestation at the national and European parliamentary level awaits its full public emergence at the local and regional Council level.<sup>10</sup> Unsurprisingly, the Scottish Labour Party is opposed to this as when it happens the dialectic of class and nation in the central belt will especially affect the central belt councils of Renfrewshire, West Lothian, South Lanarkshire, North Lanarkshire, Falkirk, West Dunbartonshire and East Ayrshire as all are clearly dominated by the SNP / Labour contest.

---

<sup>10</sup> In the by-election on November 13<sup>th</sup>, 1997 the SNP won Rosyth West & Dockyard ward from Labour. At the unitary local authority elections in 1995 the Labour party polled 46.5% of the vote; the SNP were second with 21.2% of the vote. The Conservative and Unionist Party failed to have a single councillor elected to Fife Council. By 1994, of the eight Scottish MEPs, Labour had six MEPs with 43% of the vote and the SNP had two MEPs with 33% of the vote.



The SNP has a long history of representing what the unionist political parties have sought to neglect. The historian of Scottish nationalism Richard Finlay (1994) is clear that the SNP was created because firstly the Liberal Party and then the Labour Party failed to enact Home Rule legislation for Scotland; that the *Scottish Trades Union Council* (STUC)<sup>11</sup> and trade union block vote within the *Scottish Home Rule Association* (SHRA) effectively frustrated the development of the SHRA and caused the Independent Labour Party (ILP) and Nationalist elements to break from the SHRA to form the *National Party of Scotland* in 1928. At least since the 1922 General Election Finlay argues the *Scottish Home Rule Association* should have decisively abandoned its cross-party conception of Home Rule agitation. The sooner it abandoned the apolitical approach to political praxis (the first major mediation struggle) i.e. established itself as an independent political party like the ILP *vis-a-vis* the Liberal Party did on the issue of constituting politics on the basis of class, the quicker Scottish political nationalism could proceed to the next mediation battle of social class.

To grasp the structuralist nature of working class nationalism then is to highlight certain "mediation battles" having to be successfully negotiated before credible appeal could be made to the working class. It is because in order to be successful the SNP had to constitute itself on the principle of nationality *and* class that explains the long struggle as to which way Scottish nationalism faced i.e. backward to an imagined communist Celtic authenticity of the early *Scots National League* or forward to Maclean's independent workers socialist republic.

Crucial to the post-1979 phase of nationalism was the defeat of the substantivist or "pure" idea of nationalism of Donald Stewart and Gordon Wilson after 1985 by the "working class" nationalism of the left-wing "79 Group". This change was crucial preparatory work for preparing the shift of the working class Labour vote to the SNP post-1987. I think it

---

<sup>11</sup> In 1994 the General Council of the *Scottish Trades Union Council* blocked its annual congress' invitation to the SNP leader Alex Salmond to address its annual conference.



fair to characterise the “structuralist versus substantivist” conceptions of nationalism within the history of political nationalism in Scotland in terms of a “class struggle”; a struggle which only a structuralist conception of working class reality (and therefore working class nationalism) is able to reveal. The fact that the socio-economic mediation of nationalism has an identifiable history implies it is constituted differently through time and across the generations. I have argued that the perceived decline in class solidarity and locality due to deindustrialisation, as well as the perceived “irrelevance” of Scottish national identity at a political level, was experienced in particular by the ‘79 generation’ during the Tory years of 1979-1997. I argue then for a division of semantic labour between the generations as “Cardenden” has retired from the production of locality and meaning within the older generation, and is struggling to find an alternative concept of itself in the younger generation.

As evidence of this marked difference across the generations I recall attending the funeral of a retired miner (Mr McLean) at which some of his *Bowhill Burns’ Club* (founded in 1912) friends, and members of the local history group were present. I remember thinking, for example, how dated was the genuflection to Burns in the oration. Burns as symbolic of an entire semiotic patrimony of what it is to be Scottish is dead among the ‘79 generation<sup>12</sup> because his Scots language is dead, and this acts as a metaphor for the death of the uptake of a certain idea of Scottish culture held by a previous working class generation. All of the local institutions from the Bowhill Burns Club, the Mining Archives, the Orange Lodge, the Masons, and the local history groups etc. are of a certain time and culture that the younger generation will not reproduce. A pre-discursive incredulity towards what Chapman (1978) has called “the Gaelic vision” in Scottish culture in the annual televised Mod for example, and scoffing at Burns Suppers, is par for the course among younger locals. At Hogmanay parties in brief exchanges that I heard regarding Scottish culture, the older generation defend the kilt and Scottish country dancing

as their idea of real Scottish culture while their sons and daughters are quite clear that this is *not* their culture.

At the local history group one evening when we were passing among ourselves a collection of Fife poetry in Scots, I often had to ask for a translation. The older members were incredulous I could not understand what was for them my language. However, while they lament my "Anglicisation," they did not propose to contest it. Given our awareness of the constructed nature of tradition, it can not be surprising a 'cultural group' such as a particular working class lose their tradition and the ability to extend identification to forebears for any length of time when, for example, their language is not politically powerful enough to negotiate its survival in conditions of Anglo-American modernity. To resist this 'deculturation' then becomes a political matter used by working class nationalists to justify independence.<sup>13</sup>

The rule of the construction of *working class* nationalism is that it must "mediate or die." From a structuralist viewpoint there is no paradox in that, as with being working class itself, working class nationalism unless it is deeply mediated or even dissolved "in other things," has great difficulty existing or "being itself." Clearly then, the Holyrood devolution parliament is a lifeline to the working class nationalist project. Hence, if the Labour Party had succeeded in being elected in 1987 or 1992 and the Tories had been defeated, who is to say the ever-synchronic working class would have shifted to the SNP so that today it would still be faced with the impossible task of contesting Westminster general elections on an all-British basis. The eighteen years of Thatcher / Major were the "fortuitous" structural conditions necessary for the "miracle" of Scottish *working class* nationalism to happen. If Scottish nationalism were a middle class ideology then no doubt, given their control of the major

---

<sup>13</sup> As reported in the 31 May 2001 edition of the *Fife Free Press* the local SNP MSP Tricia Marwick (herself from Cowdenbeath and steeped in the working class / Fife miners' tradition) has called for a revival of the performance of Corrie's work in the Scottish parliament. I believe this is only the beginning of a new politicisation of working class culture.

institutions and sites of cultural production, it would have attained the reality of substantivity that the working class seem incapable of.

If working class nationalism could achieve "substantiality" it will achieve independence. But by no stretch of the imagination has it become this project to date. Because Labour did win "middle England" in May 1997 the Scots were spared Doomsday Scenario number two (or was it three?). How much worse it would have needed to become before nationalism became a substantive stand-alone something among the working class we shall never know. What is certain is that the period 1992 - 1997 was the high point in the disjuncture between politics and reality and nationalism has never been more emergent among a younger working class generation as a result.

## Conclusion

When we look at a time when the alignment of class and nationality among the working class was in a similar state of flux as today, it seemed that in the iconic figures of John Maclean, James Connolly and John Wheatley an integration of nationalism and socialism, of nation and class, was only a matter of time. But these efforts at a new alignment of class and nation, that in many ways reflected the springtime of the working class's initiation into politics, had failed by the end of the nineteen thirties. The fact is the working class had to be weaned from Liberalism and the Scottish working class have traditionally taken a "British" route to politics and only with the advent of Margaret Thatcher on 4 May 1979 was this tradition radically challenged.

### Thatcherism

There was no Tartan Thatcherite revolution.

Margaret Thatcher

*The Downing Street Years* (1993)

By the end of eighteen years of Tory rule the Conservative and Unionist Party were thoroughly discredited. Interviewing George quoted earlier in chapter two, and noting the "*Scotland Forever*" tattoo on his forearm (something unremarkable among local men), I asked his views on the creation of the Scottish parliament.

Ah mean that fuckin Thatcher reign jist kill't everythin aff ken. Ah mean it's gonnae take some rebuilding like. It's got tae the stage noo ken people's jist sayin tae theirsels well, cunt it'll no maitter tae us if it's Tories or Labour or whoever's in ye ken. People jist dinnae seem tae be interested nooadays ken...Ah mean it is like a Labour fuckin community ken, bit anybody that is switchin their vote Ah mean, it'd hae tae be an idiot anybody that fuckin votes Conservative ye ken. Ah cannae see anybody gaun that wiy eh...any body that changes their vote it's gonnae be SNP ken. The SNP gets stronger an aa...ken there's mair people, Ah think they're gaitherin votes here and there....As Ah say aboot here naebody really talks politics a lot eh...naebody seems tae gie e toss. If we had an independent Scotland it cannae be a bad thing. Ken Ah mean oor haunds were fuckin tied there fir a while ken, at least noo we can fuckin speak fir oorsels ken. Pit oor side o'er.

Especially after the set-piece defeat of the miners' strike in 1984-1985, with another two Conservative general election victories still to come, and the introduction of the Poll Tax in 1988 which a generation of young working class Scots refused to pay, an already traditional anti-Tory prejudice became ever more entrenched. In a sense it was the Scottish National Party who won the miners' strike and benefited most from the eighteen years of 1979-1997. It was during these years which saw the massive decline in the manufacturing structure of Scotland and, with both Labour and the SNP out of power, the "superstructure" of culture and nationality became ever more prominent and politicised. This point has been made by Aitken in his centenary history of the *Scottish Trades Union Congress* (1997) where he argues the STUC was increasingly marginalized and impotent *industrially* during the Thatcher years and compensated by a new politico-cultural involvement.

In trying to elicit working class sensibility during and after this prolonged period of open conflict between the centralised British state and many locals, I suggest that Thatcher's infamous statement "*there*

*is no such thing as society*" can be re-interpreted as meaning *there is no such thing as the Scottish nation*. In Thatcherism, the English capitalist class produced a clear voice and, eventually, provoked a clear-cut Scottish nationalism from the Scottish working class. There is a deep cultural logic behind the fact that "Thatcher" rescued the dialectic of class and nation which in many ways had come to an agreed standstill since the inter-war period. If in the Scottish working class semiotic system, capitalism and the free market culture and society are perceived to be a "bourgeois" and essentially English project foisted on the Scots, nationalism becomes a retaliatory "proletarian" response.

Thatcherism taught working class Scots a lesson in structure and the impotence of lionised middle class institutions such as Scots law, the Scottish education system, and the Protestant church that, among the middle classes at least, are often held to constitute Scottish civil society. The lesson was that it would require more potent weapons than "civic mindedness" to defeat Thatcher. Without a state of its own to represent and protect it, it became necessary to invent one as the nation's *professions-based* civil society and unionist STUC et al. were revealed as fundamentally inadequate to the task. The net effect was to divide "Scotland" and "England" and produce a discourse of nationality difference that by the time of fieldwork had passed into locals' common sense. As one informant, Mary Gibbons, (74 Orebank Road, 12<sup>th</sup> December, 1999) had to say:

*Ah dinnae believe we're aa wane country.  
There's definitely a Scotland England divide,  
big time Ah think! Proved it time and again  
proved it. So, Ah think if we got oor  
independence it would have tae be Scotland, oor  
independence. Forget about the rest e them Ah  
think. What's Britain done fir us? Ah mean look  
at the unemployment up here, you know. Ah jist,  
nut. Ah blame Thatcher's government for the  
downfall, for the way things are the now. Ah  
blame her reign.*



It was those institutions that had long held power in Scotland, the Labour Party, professional bodies i.e. civic Scotland that eventually were deemed inadequate, even culpable. The "nationalism" of Home Rule therefore can be seen as a bourgeois deathbed conversion to retain credibility in the eyes of the working class electorate. This is my view of the *Constitutional Convention* and the "Peoples Parliament" organisation that evolved from it. Having attended one of these meetings, convened by the amiable Protestant and unionist Canon Kenyon Wright in Glenrothes during fieldwork as the local history group "representative,"<sup>1</sup> I have no hesitation in describing such bodies as representative of middle class small 'n' nationalism.

Precisely because an anti-Tory common sense had taken such deep rootedness, no informants I interviewed obtained any satisfaction from criticising what was already perceived as the irrelevance of the Conservatives. When the "unbelievable" finally happened, when all of Scotland's seventy-two Westminster constituencies rejected the Conservatives in May 1997, the rest of Scotland was expressing the same anti-Tory common sense that held this party did not even attempt to mediate or offer a rival definition of working class Scottish interests. When politically and culturally the Conservatives become irrelevant, it is not the Tories therefore but the Labour Party, the political establishment in Scotland, that becomes the target for criticism. Hence the prescience of Anthony Smith's point: "*the main battle of the nationalists is so often fought out within its chosen ethnies against the older self-definitions*" (in Eley & Suny 1996:124) i.e. those older definitions of the '45 Labour-voting generation.

However, this is not to imply any clear-cut "mass conversion" to the Scottish National Party. I believe many locals by the end of these eighteen years had become effectively alienated from politics as they felt politics *per se* was not representative of their class or national interests. The undeniable reluctance of the working class to politicise their

---

<sup>1</sup> Unsurprisingly perhaps, none of the local history group members were interested in attending.

nationality had one nationalist informant according a much greater role to England in the Scots achieving independence and allocating a much reduced role for the reluctantly nationalist Scots.

Ah'm for it, for the parliament. Ah'm very for it. Ah still think it should be everything. Ah believe that Westminster shouldnae enter intae it. Hopefully it'll come in the future. Hopefully the English will see sense and do it for us, because Ah don't think we've got the guts to do it. But certainly Ah'm all for it.

Alistair E. McLelland  
6 Woodend Park  
18 July 1999

Because for so long locals had to endure the lack of political congruence between self, class, nation and state, when the response is not apathy, the solution is conceived precisely as the restoration of this integral fit between these nested identities. And crucially, *since the nation cannot change and one's class cannot change, the state must be changed*. It is this desire to have class and nation represented at the political level that is fuelling "state-building" i.e. the politicisation of national identity via class. It was Thatcher's metropolitan myopia concerning her own banal English nationalism that forced the reluctant Scots to take up their own counter-nationalism as a means of continuing a politics of the representation of the integral self.

If many working class Scots saw in Thatcher their nemesis, they seem to have intuitively borrowed the weapons she herself wielded i.e. an unapologetic integralist approach to advancing the interests of their own class and nation to the exclusion of all others. In this respect, Thatcherism seems to have been a problem which supplied its own solution.

## Marxism

The workers have no country. No one can take from them what they have not got. Since the proletariat must first of all win political power, must make itself the ruling class, must raise itself to the position of a national class, must establish itself as the nation - it is, so far, still national, though by no means in the bourgeois sense of the term.

*The Communist Manifesto (1848)*

The former Marxist and now nationalist intellectual Tom Nairn has observed that nationalism is Marxism's greatest failure (1981). This failure of Marxism to understand nationalism is exemplified perhaps even more clearly than Anderson's (1983) famous "last wave" thesis by Held's unfortunately named article, 'Farewell to the Nation State' in *Marxism Today* (1988) on the eve of another springtime of nations in Europe. Unsurprisingly then, the history of Marxism in Scotland qualifies as another substantive illusion which has encouraged its own species of cultural antinomianism *as a matter of principle*. A related failure of Marxism in Scotland is that its theoreticians never achieved the "turn to the subject" among the working class (*vide* Goldthorpe 1979). Because of this traditional antinomianism of Marxism (Norton 1984; Gallacher 1966), we have the long-standing observation of nationalists in regard to Marxists in Scotland:

*They have built around themselves a paper wall of English books; no wonder the common Marxist cannot see Scotland.*

Malcolm MacColla  
*Scots Independent*  
September 1927

Bruce Kapferer's insistence in *Legends of People, Myths of State* (1988) that the task of anthropology is to reveal, contra the determined refusal

to understand nationalism as other than a bourgeois conceit designed to divert any particular working class from its "real" interests, the reality and efficaciousness of nationalism among working class groups is particularly relevant, given so much of Marxists' continual reduction of the SNP, and by implication those working class people who support the party, to a species of "free market Scottish nationalism" (Davidson in Bambery 1999: 131). Such mis-recognition not only disappears the embedded reality of nationalism but betrays an inadequate theoretical grasp of the structural nature of reality and, in particular, how this general theoretical point is incarnated among the working class.

The recent emergence of nationalism from the "far left," indicated briefly in chapter five does not go unchallenged among the anti-nationalist intelligentsia of the *Socialist Workers Party*. In an edited collection published under the title *Scotland: Class and Nation* (1999), even at this "late hour," we have a false dichotomisation of class and nation emerge as the main theoretical tenet. Typical in a move to discredit the working class pedigree of current nationalism is the following opening statement from the national (sic) organiser of the *Socialist Workers Party*, Chris Bambery:

The history of Scotland I learned from an early age was that the Scottish nation stretched back to the dawn of time. In this version Scotland was one of the oldest nations in Europe. But this was false. Far from there being a seamless evolution of the Scottish nation, modern Scotland was created by a series of convulsions stretching back just a little over two and a half centuries.

(1999: 1).

This imprisonment of "the working class" into the confines of modernity in fact discredits the idea of a working class perspective: as if French or Irish or Scottish nationalists believe *modern* France or *modern* Ireland or *modern* Scotland are timeless entities exhibiting "a seamless

evolution" and each require ideologists of modernism (disguised as a "working class analysis") to release them from the spell of nationalism. While in this ethnography I have attempted to articulate the reality of a working class nationalism, this does not imply ignorance of nor an inability to recognise, for example, that in its history the very idea of Scotland often depended upon the nobility and the Catholic Church for its very creation and survival.

The intellectual antinomianism that can afford not to mediate nationalism via class, often a middle class position, has then a "far left" variant. This has traditionally taken the form of an internationalism that sees any concession to the reality of the nation as a chauvinist corruption of the interests of the working class; as if there is a proletariat that is not also a (national) "people" and there exists somewhere an unproblematic "working class interest." The view that can assert "John Maclean was not a nationalist" (Bamberg 1999: 29) is based upon this error; the dogma that prevents the inability to conceive of the possibility that nationalism can be a means of working class politics. When nationalism can only ever be a bourgeois fiction then *ipso facto* working class nationalists like Maclean cannot be nationalists.

In this view the nationalist is someone prey to all sorts of mystifications that blind him or her to his or her class interests, as opposed to simply wishing to have the state congruent with the nation. The leader of the *Scottish Socialist Party*, Tommy Sheridan MSP, betrays this background and reveals the fact that he and his party are late arrivals to the working class they purport to represent by refusing to admit he is a nationalist when interviewed. Clearly, he has learned that being a nationalist is a very bad thing.

### **Liberalism**

To explain why nationalism as opposed to political Liberalism is increasing in popularity among the working class is to explain why

Liberalism is another substantive alienation from working class reality; again *as a matter of principle*. To review why liberalism is such a failure among the working class I take the leader of the Liberal Democrat party Charles Kennedy's *The Future of Politics* (2000) as a representative liberal text. Kennedy describes himself as "*an open-minded, pro-European, moderate-thinking Scot*" (2000: xiii) and champions the view that:

*The old verities have become a bonfire of the political vanities, and the joyous collapse of the Berlin Wall was to socialism what Black Wednesday became to Conservatism. There are no more glad, confident dawns. A good thing too. This uncertainty defines the territory upon which the Liberal Democrats now operate. Society seems to be defined by near-instantaneous flitting images; as a consequence we have to be fleet of foot politically.*

(2000: xvii).

Kennedy defines contemporary society as being post-class and post-nation. The implication is clear: politics and successful political parties, as well as the average "moderate thinking Scot", must similarly be post-class (i.e. post-Labour) and post-nationalist (i.e. post-SNP).

Statements such as "*Traditionally ...our support is rather evenly spread across geography, gender, generations and social strata alike*" (2000: 171) are highly liberal with the truth as the Liberals are overwhelmingly a middle class party.

Unsurprisingly then, "*The profile of Liberal Democrat voters is a confused one*" (Bennie *et al* 1997: 21). The Liberals' political marginality is due to its own peculiar brand of substantivism; its threefold lack of mediation via place, class and nationality. This absence of "emplacement" in real time and space means it rules in neither the inner city nor the countryside, so that the question as to where Liberalism is located is more than a question of location on the political spectrum. Paradoxically, it is successful in Scotland (e.g. in the



Highlands) where, despite its own rhetoric, it has managed to establish a tradition and a loyalty in a particular locality.

Liberalism is the political form of the delocalised civil society paradigm whose favoured self-concept is its claims to *reason* and as such is eminently suited to appeal to the educated secular bourgeois mind of late capitalist consumer culture. As Kennedy puts it, "*I believe that the individual is now king, the consumer is in charge*" (2000: xix). It is no surprise then that the liberals' agonistics over the alleged sudden rise in the politics of ethnicity and identity is another example of the traditional liberal inability to come to terms with the rise of "multi-class" society and "multi-class" politics after 1918. The rhetorical denunciation of "political tribalism" as a means to "evidence" and constitute the reasonableness of their preferred position echoes *The Scotsman's* editorial of May 1999 warning against "deranged anthropologists". Kennedy describes class-based voting as "*Voting on purely tribal lines*" (2000: 170) and, despite himself, evidences the liberal invention and deployment of the trope of the "primitive" (*vide* Kuper 1988) as a means to discredit what he views as 'fundamentalist' politics.

Regarding these necessary fictions "liberal thinking" requires to constitute itself, I am reminded of Paddy Ashdown in Scotland in 1999 during a televised debate in the run-up to the elections to the new Holyrood parliament. When questioned about Scottish nationalism he replied with a discourse on the evils of nationalism as evidenced by the Balkans and Yugoslavia. This paternalist response was exemplary Liberal; as if the only nationalist possible within the liberal mind-set is that of the "thug-in-waiting" variety.

The historic rise of the working class effectively ended political liberalism. Today, in conditions of deindustrialisation, political Liberalism is pitching for a second possible relevance by advocating the undesirability of constituting politics on class and national lines. The

Liberals have a long historical pedigree of alienation from class and nationality-mediated reality, having split disastrously on the issue of Irish nationalism in the 1890s and, after 1918, disintegrated further on the issue of the politicisation of class identity. Hence there is something perennially "unreal" about such a political party and philosophy. In the last analysis, there is something fundamentally *dishonest* in Kennedy's lack of engagement with social class and national identity; as if it is designed to mask from Liberals *themselves*, and the voter only secondarily, a determined lack of reflexivity.

That liberals have been marginal to Scottish politics since 1918 because of the rise of class-based politics, yet refuse to bring this to clear consciousness, is indicative of an unconscious dogmatism. The more damning point is that they thereby refuse to concede all ontological reality to class and national and ethnic identity as at least partially constitutive of the social sphere, and constitute politics as "enlightened" to the extent that it is divorced from working class reality as a matter of intellectual principle.

After having attempted to explicate the autonomous reality of working class nationalism, I can now admit there is a clear weakness in working class nationalism insofar as its success is at the mercy of particular relations and events over which it has little direct control. What the leadership of the SNP desires is that nationalism among the working class becomes an *idea in itself* i.e. that it becomes "...not a mere by-product but the very stuff of social change...not its reflection, its cause, its expression, or its engine, but the thing itself" (Geertz 1993: 251-2) and no longer at the mercy of *relations* for its formation; an idea that once emerged from economic and cultural conditions attains the level of a conscious reflexive project free of the conditions of its emergence. For this to happen, another "miracle" post the 1 July 1999 victory of history over structure among the Scottish working class must happen. And like all miracles, this remains unlikely anytime soon.

# Appendix

At the outset of fieldwork there was no formal research design if by this is meant a series of detailed research hypotheses to be tested in the field. My original intention or 'research question' was consciously general i.e. to investigate current constructions of nationalism. Having said this, I was persuaded prior to fieldwork that, in an as yet unclear fashion (at least to me), an understanding of the social bases of Scottish nationalism was fundamentally inadequate without a grasp of issues related to 'class.' Furthermore, prior to fieldwork, I was convinced that the only adequate way to investigate this hypothesis was by doing a prolonged period of fieldwork in a working class location.

Early on in fieldwork I experienced something of a crisis insofar as many informants whom I interviewed seemed not to have any positive views on the Scottish parliament. Hence began the emergence of what in chapter four I have called 'The Production of Indifference'. My original research agenda was further modified by the day-to-day experience of problematic neighbour relations; hence the felt need (preceded by a deep reluctance) to include a chapter specifically on this issue. Initially, I felt my data was steering me away from my original research questions. However I now view having had to think through such unforeseen data (i.e. indifference and neighbour relations) as having had a direct and beneficial effect vis-à-vis the understanding of issues of class and nation presented in the thesis.

Importantly therefore my thesis and its conclusions are the result of a genuine confrontation and grappling with the data as it emerged during fieldwork. Fieldwork was certainly not experienced as the easy confirmation of ideas or hypotheses held prior to fieldwork.

Having failed in my attempt to secure funding from the ESRC and Edinburgh University, my research was not financially supported in any way other than by myself through full-time paid employment; principally with *East of Scotland Water* authority during the summer months. The periods of work involved during fieldwork were determined both by financial necessity as well as by a conscious research strategy. Prior to fieldwork I was clear that the ethnographic method of 'participant observation' within a working class locality meant getting a job and working alongside locals and prospective informants. With regard to chapter 2 in particular, work mates therefore were both work mates in the ordinary sense as well as valued informants. In this respect 'ordinary working life' doubled as a means of financial support for the research period as well as providing a fieldwork site for data gathering and grounding my research.

A major research priority was to achieve a certain 'positionality' from which I could begin to obtain, in the first instance, a *practical* take on the 'native point of view.' This meant I deliberately exploited ordinary roles and activities to achieve my research priorities. Hence my identity as an 'ordinary' worker, an 'ordinary' Council tenant and father (e.g. taking my daughter to a local Mothers & Toddlers group) etc. were all used as a means of insertion into the field and a standpoint from which to theorise.

However, while I believe that 'ordinary' life activities provided tremendous opportunities for securing ethnographic data, I was also aware that by themselves, they were methodologically insufficient. For the summer months the exigencies of ordinary working life meant I was absent from the village during Monday to Friday during the day. Purely 'research priorities' then directly determined my involvement with the local history group, conducting an extensive door-to-door survey asking about locals' views on the Scottish parliament, attending the local history group for over two years and attending various public meetings as well as a general disposition to be present to the village on a day-to-day basis.

As a means of informing as many locals as possible about my research among them, at the beginning of fieldwork I contacted the local newspaper, the *Central*

*Fife Times*, in an effort to publicise myself and my research. To judge by the reaction I encountered from the article that appeared in this newspaper, for example from Community Council members and others, many locals did become aware of myself and my research from this exercise. In doing this I was motivated by the desire to be as open and as public as possible with locals; something I consider to be important from an ethical and research method standpoint.

All of my informants at *East of Scotland Water* and the local history group were fully aware that I was a student doing research on issues of 'work,' 'class' and 'nationalism'. When working with *East of Scotland Water* my identity as a researcher was not confined to letting work mates know in a one-off verbal exchange when introducing myself that I was a student doing research; their daily witnessing me taking notes among them at meetings or, as was more often the case, simply in between jobs every day, including occasions when they would 'steal' my research notebooks and begin reading them aloud to each other in the hope of 'embarrassing' me, all helped to make for what I viewed as an open and honest relationship to them.

While developing the views that I have presented in this thesis, I would often run by a work mate / informant thoughts I had about the 'world of work' and my developing views on Scottish nationalism as a working class phenomenon and on occasion we would discuss the accuracy or otherwise of my views. On more than one occasion one of the workers would print off some of my work for me as I had no access to printing facilities. This in turn would lead to discussions about my work. However, more often than not, a certain routine would establish itself and I would routinely be left to get on with my note taking without any interference from my work mates.

Having worked with a core number of *East of Scotland Water* employees for a number of summers, I made what I consider to be friends. While well aware I was a student doing research then, the identities or roles of informant and researcher soon faded into the background in the face of performing daily work routines. Through time then informants and work mates became more than work

mates and informants. In practical terms this meant the men I worked with would never preface anything they would say to me with the words *'I tell you this as an informant...'* or preface other exchanges by saying *'I tell you this as a friend...'*. I believe they made no such distinction and I believe they told me 'anything and everything' as a work mate and as a friend and, I believe reflecting the trust they had in me, let me figure out how to represent or not represent anything they said insofar as it would be part of my research.

Initially not all of my neighbours were aware I was a researcher or had only a very vague idea that I was. Certainly when I started in July 1999 to conduct interviews more locals did become aware of my research activities. Certainly all of the local history group informants were aware I was a researcher as opposed to simply a local with an interest in local history. As for pub situations, some 'informants' were and some were not aware I was doing research on Cardenden. And when they did learn that I was a student 'researching Cardenden' they often assumed, vaguely I think, that I was interested in the *history* of Cardenden rather than current issues surrounding politics and locals' views of the newly established parliament.

Nothing would cause me greater anxiety than betraying someone's confidence. I recall one informant (Bien Bernard) recalling an occasion when a researcher had interviewed him; of how she had not had the decency to send him a copy of the transcribed interview for him to read. His comment on such research practice was to describe her as a *'fuckin parasite on the working class...'*. Informants' comments such as this then have meant that I have (I hope) been scrupulous in ensuring that anything I have reported here in this research would not in any way jeopardise these friendships or in any way cause pain or any embarrassment to anyone. To my mind, anyone who knows anything about working class people know that they will often and routinely confide very personal information about themselves and their families and friends; that they confide 'everything' to work mates with whom they spend so much of their lives. Indeed, those individuals who fail in this routine self-disclosure are remarked upon as 'strange' and 'awkward' to work with. Needless to say then, the information or data gathered from such a working situation must be treated



with respect; this has meant that I have consciously omitted much information that no doubt would have shed light on many of the issues touched on in this research.

Both with work mates, neighbours and general informants, a conscious decision on my part is that I have deliberately not attempted to present certain material in 'disguised' form; rather, I have simply omitted it completely. Fulfilling my responsibility for confidentiality as a researcher to my informants to my mind would not be accomplished by using pseudonyms or any 'tricks' so as to skirt my responsibility of confidentiality towards them.

In practical terms, this concern has meant that much of the information I have gathered on kinship in particular has been omitted. At an early stage of fieldwork a chapter on kinship relations emerged as one of the most engaging topics. On consideration however, while I have continued to develop this theme more fully, at an early stage I realised this was never going to be able to be a part of the final draft of my research. Having clearly decided not to publish certain material in itself freed me from concerns over confidentiality and freed me to develop my data. While some of the conclusions to have emerged from this work have been included, e.g. in sections 1.4, 3.3 and 3.4, much of the ethnographic data upon which these conclusions are based has not been included.

I have only used pseudonyms for six locals; for the two women evicted from Council tenancies during fieldwork; for the second tenant and her sister at 57 Cardenden Road and for two individuals who I feel may be uncomfortable with my reproduction of their views. In addition, if anyone in the text is referred to solely by their Christian name, this is deliberate in that I did not want to give their full identity in case they may feel uncomfortable. Finally, I have played safe with one or two couples whom I interviewed and have decided not to name them. This is not because anything they said was not meant to be reproduced but rather, I feel that because they have never been interviewed before, they were not perhaps fully aware that their views might have been transcribed at a later date and reproduced in a final draft.

Having said the above, I want to stress *vis-a-vis* issues of confidentiality that the vast majority of door-to-door interviews I conducted during fieldwork present no problem. Many informants were only too happy to help and to elaborate at length on their views. Indeed, I suspect that many informants would not readily understand a research strategy which is at the mercy of particular people with names and addresses in the fieldwork phase, but in the 'writing-up' phase feels itself obliged to disguise such basic information. However, from the outset I made a conscious decision that if any informant was not comfortable in being quoted I would continue with the interview but was clear that no part of it would be included in the final draft of the research – no matter how interesting or valuable their comments sometimes turned out to be. I have carried out this rule-of-thumb throughout this thesis.

Generally then, while aware that a certain amount of anonymity and use of pseudonyms is inevitable, I wanted to avoid my ethnography becoming a repository of anonymous quotes and un-attributable comment. Much of the reason for this is due to having read ethnographies where not only are informants not named or located but even the name of the village or area studied has been 'disappeared.' To my mind this takes away from the reliability and ethnographic quality of the data – as well as the ethnographic veracity of the analysis based upon the data. At its most basic, a researcher can effectively fabricate evidence if he or she is free *not* to name, date and locate their sources. If scholars are scrupulous in specifying the authors and the texts they refer to and draw upon, why not apply, wherever possible, the same standards *vis-à-vis* informants?

A conscious decision was made prior to fieldwork to knock on people's doors so as to obtain data on locals' views of the Scottish parliament. The reasons for this were many. Importantly, I wanted to produce an ethnography that had a certain 'transparency;' a certain transparency in terms of the source of data and the analysis of the data. Also, from previous fieldwork conducted in the village as an undergraduate and a masters degree student, I was aware that in fieldwork locations such as the local pub for example, explicit questioning *vis-a-vis* locals'

views on the Scottish parliament would be out of place; that such a setting is more for public banter that has a rhythm and logic of its own and was something I did not want to 'interrupt' by clumsy questioning. Also, interviewing people one-to-one was a way of letting them air their views without being overheard or having to censor their views by having to take others' views into account. I wanted to provide a space for locals to express their views freely, if they so wished.

I was also conscious that it would be difficult to justify reproducing remarks and conversations that occurred in pub conversations in the final draft of the thesis. This meant I wanted to specifically conduct door-to-door interviews so that I had a supply of material that I could reproduce without being worried about issues of consent and confidentiality. People out for a drinking session at the weekend or a game of cards on a Sunday afternoon should not have to be concerned about an individual in their company developing 'ethnographer's bladder'. Where I have included such comments from locals I am confident the individuals concerned would not object.

Developing the concept of 'the reducio' in chapter two and 'marital habitus' in chapter three was a balancing act; a compromise between highlighting the importance of embodiment and presenting an ethnographic instance of such embodiment. In many ways I have not ethnographically 'followed through' the analytical points made *vis-à-vis* embodiment and have played safe by becoming my own informant so as not to have to represent informants' somatic behaviours. Included in an earlier draft of the thesis was a rich phenomenological description of a particular individual's comportment. This was omitted because the level of analysis was so relentless and 'deconstructive' of the individual involved that I felt uncomfortable in reproducing it in the final draft.

There is an undeniable extra strain placed upon the researcher when researching his or her natal village. I often wished I could have elided this strain by researching somewhere where I was clearly an 'outsider' and simply an observer or researcher; where every informant was clear that I was a researcher.

On the other hand, one of the most obvious beneficial effects of the 'collapse' of the distinction between object and research was the ability to gain access to the native point of view.

Conducting door-to-door surveys was a means of re-establishing a certain distance between myself and locals. In chapter three I describe the mild panic of having to cope with a situation where I felt there was no distinction at all between 'researcher' and 'researched.' Perhaps a more existential way of putting the above might be to say that I simply had to trust that at some future point something akin to 'anthropological knowledge' would come out of this immersion into fieldwork wherein the distinction between object and subject was impossible.

As far as the effects of being native *vis-a-vis* 'theory construction' was involved, this has meant that e.g. while writing section 4.5, I was aware that I was fishing in troubled waters and that the results of my reflection would not be appreciated by everyone. I am not naïve enough to imagine anyone warms to being represented as involved in a 'production of indifference;' no matter how 'objective' such a description tries to be. But as I have tried to make plain throughout this thesis, the paradox is that the relevant structurations present within working class culture are in fact revealed to the ethnographer only when he studies those rare individuals or groups who attempt to instantiate a dialogue or engagement with their reality. What may appear for example as an 'ungrateful' response to the local history group is in fact an ethnographer pursuing those privileged field sites where a genuine window onto structure is in fact made possible. And such opportunities are only possible because of an appreciation and long meditation on the labours of such locals.

As a native myself I feel I have a particular responsibility to be sensitive to how I represent locals; this has meant that in writing chapter four for example (and elsewhere) I had to fight against being overly sensitive and state the truth of the matter as I sincerely saw it and being prepared to systematically develop insights wherever they may lead.

In the introduction I spoke of the aim of becoming 'coeval with our own history;' in practical terms this has meant having to shoulder the burden of being prepared to try to represent people 'in the flesh' so to speak so as to arrive at this level of understanding. In arriving at this level I hope and trust I have not trespassed on the sensitivities of those very locals without whose preparedness to reveal themselves this level of understanding would never have been attempted.

# Bibliography

- Abbott, P. & Sapsford, R. 1987 *Women and Social Class*. Tavistock, London.
- Adams, G. 1996 *Before The Dawn: An Autobiography*. Heinemann, London.
- Agnew, J. 1989 'Nationalism: autonomous force or practical politics? Place and nationalism in Scotland' in Williams, C. H. & Kofman, E. (eds.) *Community Conflict, Partition and Nationalism*. Routledge, London.
- Aitken, K. 1997 *The Bairns O' Adam: The Story of the STUC*. Polygon, Edinburgh.
- Altorki, S. 1986 *Women in Saudi Arabia: Ideology and Behaviour Among the Elite*. Columbia University Press, New York.
- Anderson, B. 1983 *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, London.
- Anderson, B. 1991 *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised Edn., Verso, London.
- Anderson, B. 1998 *Spectre of Comparisons*. Verso, London.
- Ardener E. 1985 "The Decline of Modernism in Anthropology" in Overing, J. (ed.) *Reason and Morality*. Tavistock, London.
- Aretxaga, B. 1997 *Shattering Silence: Women, Nationalism, and Political Subjectivity in Northern Ireland*. Princeton University Press.



- Arnot-Page, R. 1955 *A History of the Scottish Miners from the Earliest Times*. Allen and Unwin, London.
- Ash, M. 1980 *The Strange Death of Scottish History*. The Ramsay Head Press, Edinburgh.
- Atkinson, K. 1995 *Behind the Scenes at the Museum*. Black Swan.
- Auletta, K. 1982 *The Underclass*. Random House, New York.
- Bagguley, P. 1991 *From Protest to Acquiescence? Political Movements of the Unemployed*. Macmillan, London.
- Bagguley, P. & Mann, K. 1992 'Idle thieving bastards? Scholarly representations of the "underclass"' in *Work, Employment and Society*. 6: 113-26.
- Baker, D. et al. 1995 'The Conservative parliamentary elite 1964-1994: the end of social convergence?' in *Sociology*. 29, 703-13.
- Balakrishnan, G. (ed.) 1996 *Mapping the Nation*. Verso, London.
- Balcells, A. 1996 *Catalan Nationalism: Past and Present*. Macmillan, London.
- Bambery, C. (ed.) 1999 *Scotland, Class and Nation*. Bookmarks Publications Ltd., London.
- Barth, F. 1966 *Models of Social Organisation*. Royal Anthropological Institute Occasional Paper 23.
- Barth, K. 1994 'Enduring and emerging issues in the analysis of ethnicity' in Vermeulen, H. & Govers, C. (eds.) *The Anthropology of Ethnicity: Beyond 'Ethnic Groups and Boundaries'*, Het Spinhuis, Amsterdam.

- Baudrillard, J. 1975 *The Mirror of Production*. Telos Press, St. Louis.
- Baudrillard, J. 1993 *Symbolic Exchange and Death*. Sage, London.
- Bauman, Z. 1992 'Soil, Blood and Identity' in *Sociological Review*, 40 (4).
- Bauman, Z. 1996 'From Pilgrim to Tourist: or a short history of identity' in Hall, S. and DuGay, P. (eds.) *Questions of Cultural Identity*. Sage, London.
- Beck, U. 1992 *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. Sage, London.
- Bell, C. and Newby, H. 1971 *Community Studies: An Introduction to the Sociology of the Local Community*. Allen and Unwin, London.
- Bell, D. 1988 (1960) *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties*. Harvard University Press.
- Bell, D., Caplan, P. & Karim, W. 1993 *Gendered Fields: Women, Men and Ethnography*. Routledge, London.
- Bell, W. and Robinson, R. V., 1980 'Cognitive Maps of class and racial inequalities in England and the United States' in *American Journal of Sociology*, 86, 320-49.
- Bennie, L., Brand, J. & Mitchell, J. 1997 *How Scotland Votes: Scottish Parties and Elections*. Manchester University Press.
- Benton, T. 1984 *The Rise and Fall of Structural Marxism*. Macmillan, London.
- Berger, P. & Berger, B. 1975 *Sociology: A Biographical Approach*. Basic Books, New York.

- Berger, P. & Luckman, T. 1967 *The Social Construction of Reality*. Doublesday Anchor, New York.
- Beveridge, C. and Turnbull, R. 1989 *The Eclipse of Scottish Culture: Inferiorism and the Intellectuals*. Polygon, Edinburgh.
- Beveridge, C. & Turnbull, R. 1997 *Scotland After Enlightenment: Image and Tradition in Modern Scottish Culture*. Polygon, Edinburgh.
- Beynon, H. 1984 *Working For Ford*. 2nd. ed., Penguin, Harmondsworth.
- Beynon, H. and Blackburn, R. M. 1972 *Perceptions of Work*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bhabha, H. (ed.) 1990 *Nation and Narration*. Routledge, London.
- Bhaskar, R. 1989 *Reclaiming Reality: a critical introduction to contemporary philosophy*. Verso, London.
- Biedelman, T. O. 1989 'Agonistic Exchange: Homeric Reciprocity and the Heritage of Simmel and Mauss', *Cultural Anthropology* 4: 227-59.
- Billig, M. 1995 *Banal Nationalism*. Sage Publications Ltd., London.
- Blacking, J. 1977 *Anthropology of the Body*. Academic Press, New York.
- Blondel, M. 1984 *Action (1893): Essay on a Critique of Life and a Science of Practice*. Translated by Oliva Blanchette, University of Notre Dame Press.
- Bold, A. (ed.) 1984 *Aesthetics in Scotland by Hugh Macdiarmid*. Mainstream Publishing, Edinburgh.

- Borthwick, G. et al. 1991 'The Social background of British MPs' in *Sociology*, 25, 713-17.
- Bostyn, A. 1990 *Ah Know Whit Like An 'Oor Is: The Meaning of Time in a Scottish Lowland Community*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh.
- Bourdieu, P. 1977 *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. 1979 *Algeria 1960*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. 1984 *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Routledge, London.
- Bourdieu, P. 1991 *Language and Symbolic Power*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Bourdieu, P. 1998 *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Bourdieu, P. 2001 *Masculine Domination*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Bourdieu, P., Passeron, J. C. & Saint Martin, M. 1994 *Academic Discourse*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Bourdieu, P. & Wacquant, L. J. D. 1992 *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Boyle, R. & Lynch, P. (eds.) 1998 *Out of the Ghetto?*. John Donaldson, Edinburgh.
- Bradley, J. 1995 *Ethnic and Religious Identity in Modern Scotland: Culture, Politics and Football*. Aldershot.

Bradshaw, J. & Holmes, H. 1989 *Living on the Edge: A Study of Living Standards of Families on Benefit in Tyne and Wear*. Tyneside Child Poverty Action Group, London.

Brand, J., Mitcell, J. & Surridge, P., 1993 'Identity and the vote: class and nationality in Scotland' in Norris, P. et al (eds.) *British Elections and Parties Yearbook 1993*, Hemel Hempstead, Harvester Wheatsheaf, pp. 143-57.

Brand, J., Mitchell, J. and Surridge, P. 1994 'Social Constituency and Ideological Profile: Scottish Nationalism in the 1990s' in *Political Studies* vol. 42, No. 4, pp. 616-629.

Breen, R. and Rottman, D. B. 1995 'Class analysis and class theory' in *Sociology*, 29, 453-73.

Bremmer, I. (ed.) 1993 *Nation and Politics in the Soviet Successor States*. Cambridge University Press.

Briggs, C. L. 1996 'The Politics of Discursive Authority in Research on the "Invention of Tradition" ', *Cultural Anthropology*, 11 (4), pp. 435-469.

Broun, D., Finlay, R. J. & Lynch, M. (eds.) 1998 *Image and Identity: The Making and Re-making of Scotland Through the Ages*. John Donald Publishers Ltd., Edinburgh.

Brown, G. & Alexander, D. 1998 *New Scotland, New Britain*. Labour Party Publications, London.

Brubaker, R. 1996 *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National question in the New Europe*. Cambridge University Press.

Bruce, S. 1993 'A Failure of the imagination: ethnicity and nationalism in Scotland's history' in *Scotia*, XVII.

Buchan, D. (ed.) 1994 *Folk Tradition and Folk Medicine in Scotland: The Writings of David Rorie*. Canongate Academic, Edinburgh.

Bulmer, M. 1975 'Sociological Models of the Mining Community' in *Sociological Review*. New series, vol. 23, no. 1 pp. 61-92.

Calvert, P. 1982 *The Concept of Class*. Hutchinson, London.

Campbell, A. T. 1987 "'Thou shalt not commit category:" Ethnicity and Ethnocentricity; imagined communities and imagined selves' in *Realizing Community*. Newfoundland Press.

Cardenden Local History Group, 1989 *Auchterderran of Yesteryear* Vols. 1 to 5., In Assoc. with Workers Educational Association.

Carsten, J. 1997 *The Heat of the Hearth: The Process of Kinship in a Malay Fishing Community*. Clarendon Press, London.

Caws, P. 1997 *Structuralism: A Philosophy for the Human Sciences*. Humanities Press, New Jersey.

Chapman, M. 1978 *The Gaelic Vision in Scottish Culture*. Croom Helm, London.

Charles, N. 1990 'Women and class - a problematic relationship?' in *Sociological Review*, 38, 43-89.

Charles, N. & Kerr, M. 1985 'Attitudes towards the feeding and nutrition of young children', *Research Report No. 4*, Health Education Council.



- Charles, N. & Kerr, M. 1988 *Women, Food and Families*. Manchester University Press.
- Charlesworth, S. 2000 *A Phenomenology of Working Class Experience*. University of Cambridge Press.
- Chatterjee, P. 1993 *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton University Press.
- Chatterjee, P. 1996 'Whose Imagined Community?' in Balakrishnan (ed.) *Mapping The Nation*. Verso, London.
- Clark, T. N. and Lipset, S. M. 1991 'Are social classes dying?' in *International Sociology*, 6: 397-410.
- Clark, T. N. et al 1993 'The declining political significance of class', in *International Sociology*, 8, 293-316.
- Clements, A., Farquharson, K. & Wark, K. 1996 *Restless Nation*. Mainstream Publishing, Edinburgh.
- Clifford, J. & Marcus, G. E. (eds.) 1986 *Writing Culture: The Poetics & Politics of Ethnography*. University of California Press.
- Cohen, A. 1993 'Culture As Identity' in *New Literary History*, 24 (1).
- Cohen, A. P. (ed.) 1982 *Belonging: Identity & Social Organisation in British Rural Cultures*. Manchester University Press.
- Cohen, A. P. 1985 *The Symbolic Construction of Community*. Routledge, London.
- Cohen, A. P. 1987 *Whalsay: Symbol, Segment and Boundary in a Shetland Island Community*. Manchester University Press.

Cohen, A. P. 1996 'Personal Nationalism: A Scottish View of Some Rites, Rights, and Wrongs', *American Ethnologist*, 23 (4), pp. 802-815.

Cohen, A. P. 1997 'Nationalism and Social Identity: who owns the interests of Scotland?' in *Scottish Affairs*, 18.

Cohen, A. P. & Rapport, N. (eds.) 1995 *Questions of Consciousness*. Routledge, London.

Cohen, R. 1978 'Ethnicity: problem and focus in anthropology', *Annual Review Anthropology* 7:379-403.

Colley, L. 1992 *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*. Yale University Press.

Comaroff, J. 1985 *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance*. University of Chicago Press.

Connerton, P. 1989 *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge University Press.

Connor, 1992 'Beyond reason: the nature of the ethnonational bond', *Ethnic & Racial Studies*, Vol. 16, no. 1.

Constable, N. 1997 *Maid To Order in Hong Kong: Stories of Filipina Workers*. Cornell University Press.

Corrie, J. 1939 *Black Earth*. Routledge, London.

Corrie, J. 1984 *Plays, Poems and Theatre Writings*. 7:84 Publications, Edinburgh.

Coulter, J. Miller, S. and Walker, M (eds.) 1984 *A State of Siege: Politics and Policing of the Coalfields: Miners' Strike 1984*. Canary Press, London.

Crapanzano, V. 1992 *Hermes' Dilemma and Hamlet's Desire: On the Epistemology of Interpretation*. Harvard University Press.

Csordas, T. (ed.) 1994 *Embodiment and Experience: the existential ground of culture and self*. Cambridge University Press.

Dale, A. et al 1986 'Integrating women into class theory' in *Sociology*, 19, 384-409.

Das, V. 1996 *Critical Events*. Oxford University Press.

Dennis, N. and Erdos, G. 1993 *Families Without Fatherhood*. Institute for Economic Affairs, London.

Denver, D. & Bochel, H. 1995 'Catastrophe for the Conservatives: the council elections of 1995' in *Scottish Affairs*, no. 13, pp.27-41.

Deutsch, K. 1953 *Nationalism and Social Communication*. Chapman and Hall, London.

Deutsch, K. 1969 *Nationalism and its Alternatives*. M.I.T., New York.

Devine, F. 1992 *Affluent Workers Revisited*. Edinburgh University Press.

Devine, F. 1992 'Working class evaluations of the Labour Party' in Crewe, I. et al (eds.) *British Elections and Parties Yearbook*, Hemel Hempstead, Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Devine, F. 1997 *Social Class in America and Britain*. Edinburgh University Press.

Devine, T. 1999 *The Scottish Nation 1700-2000*. Penguin Books, London.

Diamond, S. (ed.) 1979 *Towards a Marxist Anthropology: Problems and Perspectives*. Mouton Publishers.

Dinerstein, A. 1997 "Marxism and Subjectivity: Searching for the Marvellous (Prelude to a Marxist notion of action)" in *Common Sense* No. 22; pp.83-96; Journal of the Edinburgh Conference of Social Scientists.

Dirks, N. B. 1992 'Castes of mind', *Representations* 37, Winter.

Docherty, M. 1992 *A Miner's Lass: Memories by Mary Docherty*. Cowdenbeath, Fife.

Douglas, M. (ed.) 1987 *Constructive Drinking: Perspectives on Drink from Anthropology*. Cambridge University Press.

Douglas, M. & Ney, S. 1998 *Missing Persons: A Critique of the Social Sciences*, University of California Press.

Durland, K. 1904 *Among the Fife Miners*. Swan Sonnenschein, London.

Eley, G. & Suny, R. G., (eds.) 1996 *Becoming National: A Reader*. Oxford University Press.

Fantasia, R. 1988 *Cultures of Solidarity*. University of California Press.

Fantasia, R. 1995 'Class consciousness in culture, action and social organisation' in *Annual Review of Sociology*, 21, 269-87.

Featherstone, M., Hepworth, M. & Turner, B. S. (eds.) 1991 *The Body: Social Process and Cultural Theory*. Sage, London.

Finlay, R. J. 1994 *Independent and Free: Scottish Politics and the Origins of the Scottish National Party 1918-1945*. John Donald Publishers Ltd., Edinburgh.

Foster, J. 1989 'Nationality, Social Change and Class: Transformations of National Identity in Scotland', in D. McCrone, S. Kendrick and P. Straw (eds.), *The Making of Scotland: Nation, Culture and Social Change*. Edinburgh University Press.

Foucault, M. 1986 *The Care of the Self: The History of Sexuality Vol. III*. Vintage, New York.

Fukuyama, F. 1989 'The End of History?' *The National Interest*, Summer.

Gadamer, H. G. 1975 *Truth and Method*. Sheed and Ward, London.

Gallie, D. 1994 'Are the unemployed an underclass? Some evidence from the social change and economic life initiative' in *Sociology*, 28: 737-57.

Gallacher, W. 1966 *Last Memoirs*. Lawrence and Wishart, London.

Gallagher, T. 1990 'The Press and Protestant Popular Culture: A Case Study of the Scottish Daily Express' in Walker, G. & Gallagher, T. (eds.) *Sermons and Battle Hymns: Protestant Popular Culture in Modern Scotland*. Edinburgh University Press.

Gans, H. J. 1970 'Poverty and Culture: Some Basic Questions About Methods of Studying Life-Styles of the Poor' in Townsend, P. (ed.) *The Concept of Poverty: Working Papers in Methods of Investigation and Life-styles of the poor in different countries*. Heinemann, London.

- Geertz, C. 1993 *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Fontana Press, London.
- Gellner, E. 1964 *Thought & Change*. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London.
- Gellner, E. 1978 'Nationalism, or the new confessions of a justified Edinburgh sinner', *Political Quarterly*, 49 (1).
- Gellner, E. 1981 'Nationalism', *Theory and Society*, 10 (6).
- Gellner, E. 1983 *Nations and Nationalism*. Cornell University Press.
- Gellner, E. 1994 *Encounters With Nationalism*. Blackwell, Oxford.
- Gellner, E. 1996 'The Coming of Nationalism and its Interpretation: the myths of nation and class' in Balakrishnan, G. (ed.) *Mapping The Nation*. Verso, London.
- Gellner, E. 1997 *Nationalism*. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London.
- Giddens, A. 1991 *Modernity and Self-Identity*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Gilsenan, M. 1996 *Lords of the Lebanese Marches: Violence and Narrative in an Arab Society*. I. B. Tauris Publishers, London.
- Gledhill, J. 2000 (1992) *Power and Its Disguises*. Pluto Press, U.K.
- Glenny, M. 1990 *The Rebirth of History: Eastern Europe in the Age of Democracy*. Penguin, Harmondsworth.
- Glucksman, M. 1974 *Structuralist Analysis in Contemporary Social Thought: A Comparison of the Theories of Claude Levi-Strauss and Louis Althusser*. Routledge, London.



Goldthorpe, J. H. et al 1968 *The Affluent Worker: Industrial Attitudes and Behaviour*. Cambridge University Press.

Goldthorpe, J. 1979 'Intellectuals and the Working Class in Modern Britain'. Fuller Lecture, Department of Sociology, University of Essex.

Goldthorpe, J. & Marshall, G. 1992 'The promising future of class analysis: a response to recent critiques', *Sociology*, 26, 381-400.

Greenfeld, L. 1992 *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*. Harvard University Press.

Grosby, S. 1994 'The verdict of history: the inexpungeable tie of primordiality; a response to Eller and Coughlan', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 17:2, 164-71.

Habermas, J. (1962) 1989 *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Polity Press, Cambridge.

Halpern, J. M. & Kideckel, D. A. (eds.) 2000 *Neighbours At War: Anthropological Perspectives on Yugoslav Ethnicity, Culture, and History*. Pennsylvania State University Press.

Handler, R. 1984 'On Socio-Cultural Discontinuity: Nationalism and Cultural Objectification in Quebec', *Current Anthropology*, 25 (1): 55-71.

Handler, R. 1985 'On Dialogue and Destructive Analysis: Problems in Narrating Nationalism and Ethnicity', *Journal Of Anthropological Research* 4: 171-182.

Hanham, H. J. 1969 *Scottish Nationalism*. Faber & Faber, London.

- Haraway, D. 1991 *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. Routledge, New York.
- Harding, S. 1995 'Social Class differences in mortality of men: recent evidence from the OPCS Longitudinal Study' in *Population Trends*, no. 80, 31-8.
- Harvie, C. 1998 *Scotland and Nationalism: Scottish Society and Politics 1707 to the Present*. Routledge, London.
- Hayes, C. 1960 *Nationalism: A Religion*. Macmillan, New York.
- Hearn, J. 1996 'The Colony at the Core: Scottish Nationalism and the Rhetoric of Colonialism', in A. Marcus (ed.) *Anthropology for a Small Planet: Culture and Community in a Global Environment*. Brandywine Press, pp. 50-63.
- Hearn, J. 2000 *Claiming Scotland: National Identity and Liberal Culture*. Edinburgh University Press Ltd., Edinburgh.
- Heath, A. et al., 1993 *Labour's Last Chance? The 1992 Election and Beyond*. Aldershot, Dartmouth, pp. 125-48.
- Hechter, M. 1975 *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development 1536-1966*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.
- Hechter, M. 1976 'Ethnicity and Industrialisation: on the cultural division of labour' in *Ethnicity* 3: 214-224.
- Heelas, P. & Lock, A. (eds.) 1981 *Indigenous Psychologies*. Academic Press, London.
- Held, D. 1988 'Farewell to the Nation State' in *Marxism Today*, December.

- Herzfeld, M. 1992 *The Social Production of Indifference*. Berg, Oxford.
- Herzfeld, M. 1997 *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation-State*. Routledge, London.
- Hey, V. 1986 *Patriarchy and Pub Culture*. Tavistock, London.
- HMSO 1992 *Infant Feeding 1990 OPCS, SSD*, London.
- HMSO 1994 *Households below Average Income 1994 A Statistical Analysis 1979-1991/2 DSS*, London.
- HMSO 1995 *The Prevalence of Psychiatric Morbidity among Adults Living in Private Households*. OPCS Surveys of Psychiatric Morbidity in Great Britain. Report no. 1, London.
- Hobsbawm, E. J. 1964 *Labouring Men*. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London.
- Hobsbawm, E. J. & Ranger, T. (eds.) 1986 *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge University Press.
- Holton, R. J. and Turner, B. S. 1989 'Has class analysis a future? Max Weber and the challenge of Liberalism to *Gemeinschaftlich* accounts of class' in Holton, R. J. and Turner, B. S. *Max Weber on Economics and Society*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, pp. 160-196.
- Holton, R. and Turner, B. 1994 'Debate and pseudo-debate in class analysis' in *Sociology*, 28, 799-804.
- Houston, A. M. 1924 *Auchterderran, Fife: A Parish History*. Alexander Gardner Ltd., Paisley.

- Howell, D. 1986 *A Lost Left: Three Studies in Socialism and Nationalism*. University of Chicago Press.
- Hroch, M. 1985 *Social Conditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hroch, M. 1993 'From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation' in *New Left Review*, 198.
- Hutchinson, J. & Smith, A. D. (eds.) 1996 *Ethnicity*. Oxford University Press.
- Ingold, T. (ed.) 1990 *The Concept of Society is Theoretically Obsolete*, Group Debates in Anthropological Theory, University of Manchester.
- Jackson, M. 1989 *Paths Toward a Clearing: Radical Empiricism and Ethnographic Inquiry*. Indiana University Press.
- James, A., Hockey, J. & Dawson, A. (eds.) 1997 *After Writing Culture: Epistemology and Praxis in Contemporary Anthropology*. Routledge, London.
- Jayawardena, K. 1986 *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World*. Zed Books, London.
- Jean-Klein, I. 2000 'Mothercraft, statecraft, and subjectivity in the Palestinian Intifada' in *American Ethnologist* Vol. 27; No.1.
- Jean-Klein, I. 2001 'Nationalism and Resistance: the two faces of everyday activism in Palestine during the Intifada' in *Cultural Anthropology* 16; 83-126.

- Johnston, T. n.d. *The History of the Working Classes in Scotland*. Forward, Glasgow.
- Kapferer, B. 1988 *Legends of People, Myths of State*. Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Keating, M. 1996 *Nations Against the State: The New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland*. Macmillan, London.
- Kedourie, E. 1960 *Nationalism*. Hutchinson, London.
- Kennedy, C. 2000 *The Future of Politics*. Harper Collins, London.
- Kidd, C. 1993 *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of an Anglo-Scottish Identity 1689 - c.1830*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kingston, M. H. 1976 *The Warrior Woman: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.
- Kohn, H. 1945 *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study of its Origins and Background*. Macmillan, London.
- Konig, R. 1973 *A La Mode*. Seabury Press, New York.
- Kravitz, P. (ed.) 1999 *The Picador Book of Contemporary Scottish Fiction*. Ted Smart, Picador, U.K.
- Kumar, K. 1993 'Civil Society: An Inquiry Into the Usefulness of an Historical Term', *British Journal of Sociology*, 44 (3), pp.375-395.
- Kuper, A. 1988 *The Invention of Primitive Society: Transformations of an Illusion*. Routledge, London.

- Lee, D. 1994 'Class as a social fact' in *Sociology*, 28, 397-416.
- Levi-Strauss, C. 1963 (1958) *Structural Anthropology*. Translated by Claire Jacobson and Brooke Schoepf, Penguin Books.
- Lewis, G. 1980 *Day of Shining Red*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lienhardt, G. 1980 'Self: Public and Private. Some African Representations', *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford*, 11: 69-82.
- Lieven, A. 1993 *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Path to Independence*. Yale University Press.
- Lipset, S. M. 1981 'Whatever happened to the proletariat?' in *Encounter*, 56: 18-34.
- Littlejohn, J. 1963 *Westrigg: The Sociology of a Cheviot Parish*. Routledge & Paul, London.
- Llobera, J. 1994 *The God Of Modernity: The Development of Nationalism in Western Europe*. Berg, Oxford.
- Lutz, C. 1988 *Unnatural Emotions: Everyday Sentiments on a Micronesiam Atoll and their Challenge to Western Theory*. University of Chicago Press.
- Lynch, M. 1992 (1991) *Scotland: A New History*. Pimlico, London.
- Lyotard, J. 1993 *Libidinal Economy*. The Athlone Press, London.
- MacCormick, N. 1996 'Liberalism, Nationalism and the Post-Sovereign State', *Political Studies*, XLIV, pp.553-67.



MacInnes, J. 'Rise and Be a Broadcaster Again?', *Scottish Affairs*, 7, pp. 135-141.

Marcus, G. & Fisher, M. 1986 *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*. University of Chicago Press.

Marshall, T. H. 1983 'Citizenship and Social Class' in D. Held et al (eds.) *States and Societies*, New York University Press.

Martin, F. M. 1954 'Some Subjective aspects of social stratification' in Glass, D. V. (ed.) *Social Mobility in Britain*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

Mascie-Taylor, C. G. N. 1990 'The biology of social class' in Mascie-Taylor, C. G. N. (ed.) *Biosocial Aspects of Social Class*. Oxford University Press, pp. 117-42.

Mauss, M. 1990 *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. Routledge, London.

Mauss, M. 1979 *Sociology and Psychology: Essays*. Routledge, London.

McClintock, A. 1993 'Family Feuds: gender, nationalism and the family' in *Feminist Review*, 45.

McCrone, D. 1992 *Understanding Scotland: the Sociology of a Stateless Nation*. Routledge, London.

McCrone, D. 1998 *The Sociology of Nationalism: Tomorrow's Ancestors*. Routledge, London.

McCrone, D., Kendrick, S. & Straw, P. (eds.) 1989 *The Making of Scotland: Nation, Culture and Social Change*. Edinburgh University Press.

- McNally, S. G. et al 1991 *Bringing Class Back In*. Westview Press, Boulder.
- McRae, S. 1990 'Women and Class Analysis' in Clarke, J. et al (eds.) *John H. Goldthorpe: Consensus and Controversy*. Falmer Press, London.
- Macdonald, S. 1997 *Reimagining Culture: Histories, Identities and the Gaelic Renaissance*. Berg, Oxford.
- Macintyre, S. 1980 *Little Moscovs: Communism and Working Class Militancy in Inter-War Britain*. Croom Helm, London.
- Marquand, D. 1993 'The twilight of the British State? Henry Dubb versus sceptred awe' in *Political Quarterly*, 64 (2).
- Marshall, G. 1988 'Some remarks on the study of working class consciousness' in Rose, D. (ed.) *Social Stratification and Economic Change*. Hutchinson, London.
- Marshall, G. 1997 *Repositioning Class: Social Inequality in Industrial Societies*. Sage Publications.
- Meneley, A. 1996 *Tournaments of Value: Sociability and Hierarchy in a Yemeni Town*. University of Toronto Press.
- Miller, W., Brand, J. & Jordan, M. 1981 'Government without a mandate: its causes and consequences for the Conservative Party in Scotland' in *Political Quarterly*, vol. 52, pp.203-13.
- Morris, B. 1978 'Are There Any Individuals in India? A Critique of Dumont's Theory of the Individual' *The Eastern Anthropologist* 31, No. 4.

Morris, L. 1992 'The social segregation of the long-term unemployed in Hartlepool' in *Sociological Review*, 38, 344-69.

Morrison, T. 1992 *Playing in the Dark*. Harvard University Press.

Morton, G. 1999 *Unionist Nationalism: Governing Urban Scotland 1830-1860*. Tuckwell Press, East Linton, Scotland.

Myers, F. R. 1991 *Pintupi Country, Pintupi Self: Sentiment, Place and Politics among Western Desert Aboriginies*. University of California Press.

Myers, F. R. 1993 'Place, Identity and Exchange in a Totemic System' in Fajans, J. (ed.) *Exchanging Products, Producing Exchange*. Oceania Monograph, 43, Oceania Publications, Sydney.

Nadel-Klein, J. 1997 'Crossing a Representational Divide: from West to East in Scottish Ethnography' in James, A. et al *After Writing Culture: Epistemology and Praxis in Contemporary Anthropology*. Routledge, London.

Nairn, T. 1981 (1977) *The Break-up Of Britain*. (2nd edition), New Left Review, London.

Nairn, T. 1994 'Beyond Reason? Ethnos or Uneven Development' in *Scottish Affairs*, 8.

Nairn, T. 1997 *Faces of Nationalism: Janus Revisited*. Verso, London.

Nairn, T. 2000 *After Britain: New Labour and the Return of Scotland*. Granta Books, London.

Nash, J. 1993 *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us: Dependency and Exploitation in Bolivian Tin Mines*. Columbia University Press. New York.

Nast, H., & Pile, S. (eds.) 1998 *Places Through the Body*. Routledge, London.

Norton, R. 1984 'Ethnicity and Class: a conceptual note with reference to the politics of post-colonial societies' in *Ethn. Racial Stud.* 7 (3): 426-434.

Obeyesekere, G. 1979 'The vicissitudes of the Sinhala-Buddhist identity through time and change', in Roberts, M. (ed.) *Collective Identities, Nationalism and Protest in Modern Sri Lanka*. Marga, Colombo.

Obeyesekere, G. 1981 *Medusa's Hair*. University of California Press.

Offe, C. 1985 'Work: the key sociological category?' in Offe, C. *Disorganised Capitalism: contemporary transformations of work and politics*. Edited by John Keane. Polity Press, Cambridge, pp. 129-50.

O'Hagan, A. 1999 *Our Fathers*. Faber and Faber, London.

Ortner, S. 1984 'Theory in Anthropology Since the Sixties', in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 26, no. 1: 126-66.

Ortner, S. 1995 'Resistance and the problem of ethnographic refusal', in *Society for Comparative Study of Society and History*, 37: 173-193.

Ouroussoff, A. 1993 'Illusions of rationality: false premises of the liberal tradition', *Man* (N.S.) 28, 281-298.

Overing, J. (ed.) 1985 *Reason and Morality*. Tavistock Publications, London.

- Palm, G. 1977 *The Flight From Work*. Cambridge University Press.
- Pakulski, J. and Waters, M. 1996 *The Death of Class*. Sage, London.
- Parker, A., Russo, M., Summer, D. and Yaeger, P. (eds.) 1992 *Nationalism and Sexualities*. Routledge, New York.
- Paterson, L. 1994 *The Autonomy of Modern Scotland*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Paterson, L. 1996 'Does nationalism matter?' *Scottish Affairs*, 17, Autumn, 112-19.
- Perry, E. (ed.) 1996 *Putting Class in its Place: worker identities in East Asia*. University of California.
- Plant, M. A. 1979 *Drinking Careers: Occupations, Drinking Habits and Drinking Problems*. Tavistock, London.
- Pollert, A. 1981 *Girls, Wives, Factory Lives*. Macmillan, London.
- Purcell, K. 1982 'Female manual workers, fatalism and the reinforcement of inequalities' in Robbins, D. (ed.) *Rethinking Social Inequality*. Aldershot: Gower, pp. 43-64.
- Rankin, I. 1986 *The Flood*. Polygon, Edinburgh.
- Rankin, I. 1987 *Knots and Crosses*. Orion Books Ltd., London.
- Rankin, I. 1999 *Dead Souls*. Orion Books Ltd., London.
- Rantalaiho, L. & Heiskanen, T. 1997 *Gendered Practices in Working Life*. Macmillan Press, London.

Reid, I. 1998 *Class In Britain*. Polity Press, London.

Reilly, P. 1998 'You Are the People, Who Are We? - Some Reflections on the Irish Catholic Contribution to Scottish Society' in Boyle, R. & Lynch, P. (eds.) *Out of the Ghetto?* John Donald Ltd., Edinburgh.

Rosaldo, M. 1980 'The use and abuse of anthropology: reflections on feminism and cross-cultural understanding', *Signs*, 5 (3): 389-417.

Rosaldo, M. 1980 *Knowledge and Passion*. Cambridge University Press.

Ruby, J. (ed.) 1982 *A Crack in the Mirror: Reflexive Perspectives in Anthropology*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Sahlins, M. 1974 *Stone Age Economics*. Tavistock Publications, London.

Sahlins, M. 1976 *Culture and Practical Reason*. University of Chicago Press.

Said, E. 1993 *Culture and Imperialism*. Chatto & Windus, London.

Sapir, E. 1970 *Culture, Language and Personality: Selected Essays*. University of California.

Saunders, P. 1990 *Social Class and Stratification*. Tavistock, London.

Scheper - Hughes, N. & Lock, Margaret 1987 'The Mindful Body: A Prolegomena to Future Work in Medical Anthropology' *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 1: 6-41.

Scheper-Hughes, N. 1992 *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life In Brazil*. University of California Press.



Schwartzmantel, J. 1992 'Nation versus class: nationalism and socialism in theory and practice' in Coakley, J. (ed.) *The Social Origins of Nationalist Movements*. Sage, London.

Schwimmer, E. 1979 'The Self and the Product' in Wallman, S. (ed.) *A Social Anthropology of Work*. Academic Press, London.

Scott, J. C. 1976 *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia*. Yale University Press.

Scott, J. C. 1985 *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. Yale University Press.

Scott, J. C. 1990 *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. Yale University Press.

Seawright, D. & Curtice, J. 1995 'The decline of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party, 1950-92: religion, ideology or economics?' in *Contemporary Record*, vol. 9, no.2, pp.319-42.

Segal, D. & Handler, R. 1992 'How European is Nationalism?', *Social Analysis*, 32: 1-15.

Sekulic, D., Massey, G. and Hodson, R. 1994 'Failed sources of a common identity in the former Yugoslavia' in *American Sociological Review*, 59 (1).

Seligman, A. 1992 *The Idea of Civil Society*. Free Press, New York.

Seton-Watson, H. 1977 *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins and the Politics of Nationalism*. Methuen, London.

Shields, R. 1999 *Lefebvre, Love and Struggle*. Routledge, London.

Shils, E. 1957 'Primordial, personal, sacred and civil ties' in *British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 7, pp.113-45.

Shils, E. 1995 'Nation, nationality, nationalism and civil society' in *Nations and Nationalism*, 1 (1).

Siegelbaum, L. & Walkowitz, D. 1995 *Workers of the Donbass Speak: Survival and Identity in the New Ukraine, 1989-1992*. State University of New York Press.

Sissons, P. L. 1973 *The Social Significance of Church Membership in the Burgh of Falkirk*. Church of Scotland, Edinburgh.

Skelley, J. (ed.) 1976 *1926: The General Strike*. Lawrence and Wishart, London.

Smith, A. 1986 *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*. Blackwell, Oxford.

Smith, A. 1994 'The problem of national identity: ancient, medieval and modern?', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 17, no. 3, July.

Smith, G. (ed), 1996 *The Baltic States: The National Self-determination of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*. Macmillan, London.

Smout, T. C. 1994 'Perspectives on the Scottish Identity' in *Scottish Affairs*, 6.

Spencer, J. 1990 'Writing Within: Anthropology, Nationalism and Culture in Sri Lanka', *Current Anthropology*, vol. 31, no. 3.

Stevenson, R. & Wallace, G. 1996 *Scottish Theatre Since the Seventies*. Edinburgh University Press.

- Stoller, P. 1989 *The Taste of Ethnographic Things: the Senses in Anthropology*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Tamir, Y. 1993 *Liberal Nationalism*. Princeton University Press.
- Taussig, M. 1987 *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wild Man: a study in terror and healing*. University of Chicago Press.
- Taussig, M. 1992 *The Nervous System*. Routledge, London.
- Taylor, C. 1989 *Sources of the Self: the making of modern identity*. Cambridge University Press.
- Thatcher, M. 1993 *The Downing Street Years*. Harper Collins.
- Thompson, E. P. 1989 *The Nature of Work*. Macmillan, London.
- Thompson, E. P. 1967 'Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism' in *Past and Present*, 38; pp.56-97.
- Thomson, M. 1992 *Class Consciousness: A Comparative Study of the Twenties and Eighties in two Scottish Mining Communities*. Unpublished thesis. Kirkcaldy Public Library.
- Tiryakian, E. & Rogowski, R. (eds.) 1985 *New Nationalisms of the Developed West*. Allen & Unwin, London.
- Touraine, A. 1981 'Une Sociologie sans Societe,' *Revue Francaise de Sociologie*, 22:1.
- Trevor-Roper, H. 1983 'The invention of tradition: the Highland tradition of Scotland' in Hobsbawm, E. & Ranger, T. (eds.) *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge University Press.

Trist, E. L. and Bamforth, K. W. 1951 'Some Social and Psychological Consequences of the Longwall Method of Coal Getting' in *Human Relations*, vol. 4, no. 1 pp.3-38.

Turner, R. 1984 'We're A' Jack Tamson's Bairns: Central Lowland Scotland as a Culture Area'. Abridged version in *Proceedings of the Association for Scottish Ethnography*. Vol. 1, 1984.

Turner, R. [n.d.] 'Gala Day as an Expression of Community Identity' in Anthony Jackson (ed.) *Way of Life and Identity*. North Sea Oil Panel Occasional Paper no. 4.

Turner, V. 1957 *Schism and Continuity in an African Society*. Manchester University Press.

Verdery, K. 1993 Whither "Nation" and "Nationalism"?, *Daedalus*, 122:3.

Wacquant, L. 1995 'The pugilistic point of view: how boxers think and feel about their trade' in *Theory and Society*, 24: 489-535.

Walkerdine, V. 1996 'Working-class women: psychological and social aspects of survival', in Wilkinson, S. (ed.) *Feminist Social Psychologies: International Perspectives*. Open University Press.

Wallerstein, I. 1979 *The Capitalist World Economy*. Cambridge University Press.

Wallerstein, I. 1980 'One man's meat: the Scottish great leap forward' in *Review*, 3 (4).

Wallman, S. (ed.) 1979 *Social Anthropology of Work*. Academic Press, London.

- Weber, M. 1989 (1930) *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Unwin Hyman, London.
- Wight, D. 1987 *Hard Workers and Big Spenders facing the Bru: Understanding Men's employment and consumption in a de-industrialised Scottish Village*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh.
- Wight, D. 1993 *Workers Not Wasters: Masculine Respectability, Consumption and Unemployment in Central Scotland*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Williams, B. F. 1989 'A Class Act: Anthropology and the Race to Nation Across Ethnic Terrain' in *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18: 401-44.
- Williams, R. 1977 *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford University Press.
- Willis, P. 1981 (1977) *Learning to Labour*. Farnbrough, Saxon House.
- Wirth, L. 1961 *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism*. University of Wisconsin Press.
- Wood, E. M. 1986 *The Retreat From Class*. Verso, London.
- Wood, E. M. 1991 *The Pristine Culture of Capitalism*. Routledge, London.
- Wood, E. M. & Foster, J. B. (eds.) *In Defence of History*. Monthly Review Press, New York.
- Yack, B. 1996 'The Myth of the Civic Nation', *Critical Review*, 10 (2), pp.193-211.
- Yuval-Davis, N. 1997 *Gender and Nation*. Sage, London.

Zerubavel, E. 1997 *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology*. Harvard University Press.

Zizek, S. 2000 *The Fragile Absolute: or, why the Christian Legacy is worth Fighting For*. Verso, London.